THREE CANADIANS DIE IN AFGHANISTAN, PG 8

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Sports pg 13

Leafs add draft picks at trade deadline

Controversies never get old

ACRONYM Some think the idea should have been dead on arrival.

But the Iowa House has approved a bill changing the name of the Department of Elder Affairs.

If the legislation is signed by Gov. Chet Culver, the agency will be known as the Department of Aging — or DOA.

Representative David Heaton is one of those who isn't too happy with the vote. He's offended by the acronym for an agency that helps elderly Iowans.

Culver hasn't taken sides, but now it's up to him whether the proposal lives — or is DOA.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Riding the **Recession**

Looking for ways to save money and ride out the economic storm? Now through the end of March, Metro will share advice on how to cut down on expenses and navigate your way through the recession.

• Food

Budget-friendly meals your whole family will love, and a local Meal for a Steal, pg 26

• Tomorrow

News – How are employment insurance offices dealing with an increased number of people applying for EI benefits?

• Coming Up

Comment – Anne Hines offers some odd money saving tips

Movies **Watch out**

MTV PHOTO

Canadian actress Malin Akerman laughs yesterday during a stop at MTV Live. Akerman talked about her highly anticipated superhero movie Watchmen, which hits theatres tomorrow.

Smoke signals

Ontario may chase tobacco companies for health costs

Ontario is looking to become the latest jurisdiction to go after tobacco companies for misrepresenting the health risks of smoking and costing the province billions of dollars.

Attorney General Chris Bentley has introduced new legislation that, if passed, could allow the provincial government to seek billions of dollars in damages from the three big Canadian cigarette manufacturers: Imperial Tobacco; Rothmans, Benson and Hedges; and JTI-Macdonald.

"Ontario taxpayers should not have to pay for health-care costs if they are caused by alleged wrongs by others," Bentley said yesterday. "This is about holding tobacco companies accountable."

The legislation is based on a similar bill in British Columbia that alleges tobacco companies marketed light cigarettes as safer than regular ones, and targeted their marketing toward children.

It is also alleged the companies conspired to hold back research about the harmful effects of tobacco and to undermine the health warnings that had been issued, Bentley said, noting those allegations have yet to be proven in court.

Michael Perley, director of the Ontario Campaign for Action of Tobacco, said a successful lawsuit could bring in as much as $60 billion.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Deaths

• Tobacco use accounts for the deaths of about 13,000 Ontario residents each year — or 36 deaths per day — and almost 500,000 hospital days annually.

Asteroid comes 'pretty darn close' to the Earth

An asteroid about the size of one that blasted Siberia a century ago just buzzed the Earth.

The asteroid named 2009 DD45 was about 78,500 kilometres from Earth when it zipped past early Monday, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory reported.

That's just twice as high as the orbits of some telecommunications satellites and about one-fifth of the distance to the moon.

"This was pretty darn close," astronomer Timothy Spahr of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics said yesterday.

But not as close as the tiny meteoroid 2004 FU162, which came within 6,500 kilometres in 2004.

The space rock measured between 21 metres and 47 metres in diameter.

The Planetary Society said that made it the same size as the asteroid that exploded over Siberia in 1908 and levelled more than 2,000 square kilometres of forest.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Elderly woman seriously injured by car
A 75-year-old woman was clinging to life in hospital after being struck by a car in Scarborough as she tried to cross Neilson Road in mid-block yesterday morning. She had a fractured hip and pelvis, broken ribs and head injuries. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Local

Recovered loot still unclaimed

Police said yesterday some of the loot recovered from a string of armed robberies in Trinity-Bellwoods Park still hasn't been claimed by the victims. Several callers had reported Monday evening that a young duo using disguises were demanding cellphones, iPods and other valuables from passersby. Two teens arrested at the scene face multiple robbery and weapons charges. If you think you were a victim, please call 416-808-1400. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Tomorrow's Metro

Movies

Metro finds out if The Watchmen lives up to the expectations of the comic book's devoted fan base.

metronews.ca
What's online today.

Video 22 Minutes comedian crashes and burns in an attempt to mock Ontario premier Dalton McGuinty at **metronews.ca/canada**

Watch Mother demands names of faceless bureaucrats and others she blames for her daughter's in-custody death at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries

Lotto 6/49: 7, 15, 23, 25, 27 & 40. Bonus 43.
Ontario 49: 1, 12, 23, 32, 35 & 47. Bonus 28.
Ontario Pick 3: 5 9 5; **Ontario Pick 4** : 0 2 4 6
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Daily Keno: 6, 7, 9, 13, 15, 24, 25, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, 41, 42, 51, 59, 63, 64, 66, 68.
These results are not official.

News in brief

SENTENCE A Mississauga man has been given an eight year prison sentence for stomping his wife to death after he accused her of lying to him.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

RENE JOHNSON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

With the pesticide ban in full effect, dandelions will begin popping up all over the GTA as the weather turns warmer. Here a cyclist passes a crop of dandelions near Marilyn Bell Park last May.

Province unveils banned pesticides

Despite threat of lawsuit, 2,4-D on the list

Ontario has released a final list of pesticides that will be banned for cosmetic use and sale — including weed killer 2,4-D — starting on Earth Day on April 22.

Environment Minister John Gerretsen says the new regulations will prohibit the sale and use of 2,4-D in its concentrated form, despite a NAFTA challenge from its manufacturer.

Dow AgroSciences, a unit of Dow Chemical, filed a $2-million notice of action against the federal government last August.

It alleges that Quebec's ban on 2,4-D violates Canada's obligations under NAFTA because it prohibits a product without any scientific basis.

Gerretsen says he won't back down from a ban that protects the health and safety of Ontario residents just because there's a threat of a potential lawsuit.

Ontario passed legislation last year banning the sale and use of pesticides with few exceptions, such as golf courses and agricultural purposes.

The final list of substances that would fall under the ban — including 2,4-D — wasn't made public until yesterday.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Complete list

• To get the complete list of banned pesticides to go: http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/land/pesticides/class-pesticides.php

Pilot spots a laser aimed at plane

AVIATION A laser beam was aimed into the cockpit of an Air Canada airplane several times as it was about to land at Pearson International Airport yesterday morning.

Air Canada flight 754, which left San Francisco International Airport at about 11:30 p.m. Tuesday, was to land in Toronto at about 6 a.m. yesterday. But as the plane descended, the cockpit crew reported being flashed by a green beam from the Downsview area.

The conversation between the pilots and the Pearson control tower was captured by LiveATC.net.

"We just had two laser hits," a male pilot can be heard saying.

After a short pause, he reports: "Where (Highway) 400 joins (Highway) 401, say, about three blocks northeast of that."

Back in November, noting that such incidents had doubled over the past year, Canadian pilots called for tougher penalties for those caught beaming the blinding lights at airplanes.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Scammers claim to be food testers

HEALTH Mom-and-pop food stores and restaurants across the GTA are being scammed by fake health inspectors pushing unnecessary food and water tests, authorities say.

Dozens of convenience store and restaurant owners, most of them new Canadians, have told Peel, Halton and Toronto health departments they were contacted by a "food and water safety technician" selling $30 to $40 safety tests.

The so-called technicians reportedly say the tests are mandatory, and hand out what looks like "old meat plant inspection forms" from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, said Matt Ruf, Halton Region's manager of food safety.

"To have somebody preying on people. ... It's distasteful."
Matt Ruf

"To have somebody preying on people. … It's distasteful," Ruf said.

Halton and Toronto officials said the people typically identify themselves as representatives of the Canadian Food Safety Institute or the Canadian Food Safety Resource Centre, which the institute founded according to the website www.cfsrc.com.

The CFSI "is not an agency we would deal with," said Rob Colvin, manager of healthy environments for Toronto Public Health. "I think it's just a front."

So far, only a handful of business owners — including two in Toronto — have been taken in, officials said.

The cases starting emerging first in Peel and Halton in mid-January, then in Toronto about three weeks ago, Colvin said.

Jalal Hadibhai, who owns the Down Under convenience store in Yorkville (110 Bloor St. W), said a woman called Monday, saying she would send a technician the next day to perform E.coli tests in the store. She wanted $39.95 in cash or cheque, he said.

Hadibhai called Toronto Public Health to check whether the tests were legitimate and was told not to buy it, he said. In the end, no one came to the store.

"I would have asked for I.D.," the store owner said. "I would never give them cash."
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

U of T student wins award

HONOUR Jasmeet Sidhu didn't consider herself a feminist until she started exploring issues like gender inequity in politics, violence against women and inequality in the business world. But once she began researching them there was no holding back this University of Toronto student.

Jasmeet Sidhu

The third-year student, first got interested in feminism while serving as the youngest member of the Toronto Star Community Editorial Board in 2007.

Now Sidhu, 21, is this year's winner of the Michele Landsberg Award, which is given out annually by the Canadian Women's Foundation.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

North York school evacuated due to fire

A Toronto school was evacuated after a two-alarm blaze broke out in North York yesterday. Flames erupted in Overland Learning Centre while a welder was conducting some repairs at around 10 a.m., said Capt. Mike Strapko of Toronto Fire. No injuries were reported. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Chrysler cuts 1,200 jobs

Chrysler LLC has given notice that it will eliminate the third shift at its minivan assembly plant in Windsor, Ont., affecting 1,200 workers — the latest bad news for Canada's beleaguered auto sector and Ontario's reeling economy.

The company, which has requested billions of dollars of financial assistance from American and Canadian governments, announced yesterday from Auburn Hills, Mich., that about one-quarter of the Windsor assembly plant's workforce will be placed on indefinite layoff.

Chrysler's announcement said the third shift would end "no sooner than June 24" — leaving some question as to when the affected employees will be actually out of work and leaving some hope that work could be salvaged if the battered North American auto market improves.

But Ken Lewenza, national president of the Canadian Auto Workers union and a former employee at the minivan plant, said the company has decided there's no sign that demand will pick up this spring or summer, normally a good time for sales.

"For them to take the third shift off, believe me, they've analysed this up and down, sideways and backwards and, today, the sales don't substantiate the third shift," Lewenza said.

"But from my perspective, the Chrysler minivan continues to be an incredibly successful vehicle … But today nobody's buying. We've just got to hope, and raise expectations, that there's a possibility — once we get through this recession — that this minivan plant will get back to normal."

Mary Gauthier, a Chrysler spokeswoman in Windsor, said the jobs are a casualty of the huge drop in vehicle sales that has been occurring in the United States, where industry sales volume in February dropped 41 per cent from a year ago.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Windsor plant background

- The Windsor plant currently has 4,450 hourly workers making Dodge Grand Caravan and Chrysler Town & Country minivans and is Chrysler's only supplier of minivans, since it shut down production of the vehicles at two U.S. plants.

DAVE CHIDLEY/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chrysler says it's eliminating the third shift at its minivan assembly plant in Windsor, Ont., seen here in this file photo.

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Religious people less stressed: Report

RESEARCH Strong religious convictions can lower stress and enhance the performance of basic tasks, a team of Toronto researchers has found.

They came to that conclusion after putting 28 of their students through tests measuring both their religious fervour and their stress at making mistakes on a test.

"The more religious they were, the less brain activity they showed in response to their own errors," says University of Toronto assistant psychology professor Michael Inzlicht, lead author of the study in Psychological Science. "They are calmer when they make errors."

The students, from a variety of backgrounds including Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist, were asked how much they agreed that their religion was based on objective truth, whether they would go to war for their faith, and other such statements.

Inzlicht says religious people have a belief system to help them make sense of the world, so can better accept the occasional mistake. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Feds plan to look into Ticketmaster complaints

COMPETITION Ticketmaster is coming under more scrutiny, this time by the Competition Bureau.

Industry Minister Tony Clement says the federal government wants to investigate complaints that the mammoth entertainment company gives tickets to its reselling subsidiary, which then sells them at higher prices.

Tony Clement

Clement says he's not prejudging the allegations, but wants to determine whether Ticketmaster is abusing its position.

Earlier this week, Ontario's attorney general said he would investigate complaints by some Ticketmaster customers that they were being denied access to tickets at a fair price.

Last week, Ticketmaster agreed to pay the state of New Jersey $350,000 after fans made complaints.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

ROBBERY Two men are being sought after an Ajax Canadian Tire manager was threatened with a handgun and forced to open a store safe before being left tied up in the store on Tuesday.

REMEMBRANCE A Vaughan high school is teaming up with York Region police to raise money for a charity in remembrance of Const. Davis Ahlowalia, who was killed along with three others when an oncoming van swerved into his lane while he was off-duty.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Beheading case decision expected today

A judge was to decide today whether a man diagnosed by both Crown and defence doctors as mentally ill was criminally responsible when he beheaded a Greyhound bus passenger. Vince Li's case wrapped up yesterday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Downturn's impact being felt

A new poll suggests the recession is having a significant impact in the lives of about one-third of Canadians. The Canadian Press Harris-Decima survey found 35 per cent of respondents have made "significant" or "very significant" changes, and almost one in five are changing their retirement plans. The economic downturn has claimed about 210,000 jobs in the past three months.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Former Air India suspect accused of ducking bill

COURTROOM A lawyer for the Crown says a man acquitted in the Air India bombing trial has manipulated the government for years to avoid repaying millions of dollars in legal funding.

Frank Potts told the B.C. Appeal Court that Ripudaman Singh Malik portrayed himself as a millionaire businessman at a bail hearing, then later said his assets were worthless and he needed public money to pay his lawyers.

In August 2002, the government signed an agreement with Malik and paid $5.2 million in legal fees for an unprecedented defence team of 11 lawyers.

Malik was acquitted of the mass murders of 331 people in two separate 1985 bombings targeting Air India planes. THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

PIRATE A man faces 52 charges under the Copyright Act after RCMP seized 200,000 CDs and DVDs from Winnipeg-based Audiomaxxx.com last March.

DOGS Animal cruelty charges have been stayed against a renowned northern painter, Archie Beaulieu, whose 44 sled dogs were found underfed and injured. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Security from steel

Stelco promises to honour pensions, loans

Premier Dalton McGuinty says he's been reassured workers at U.S. Steel Canada will get their pensions despite massive layoffs.

McGuinty says representatives of the former Stelco told the Ontario government they will honour all their obligations for both pensions and government loans.

But he admits he doesn't know what that means in terms of bringing back any of the 1,500 lost jobs amid a temporary shutdown of its Hamilton mill and most of its Lake Erie operations.

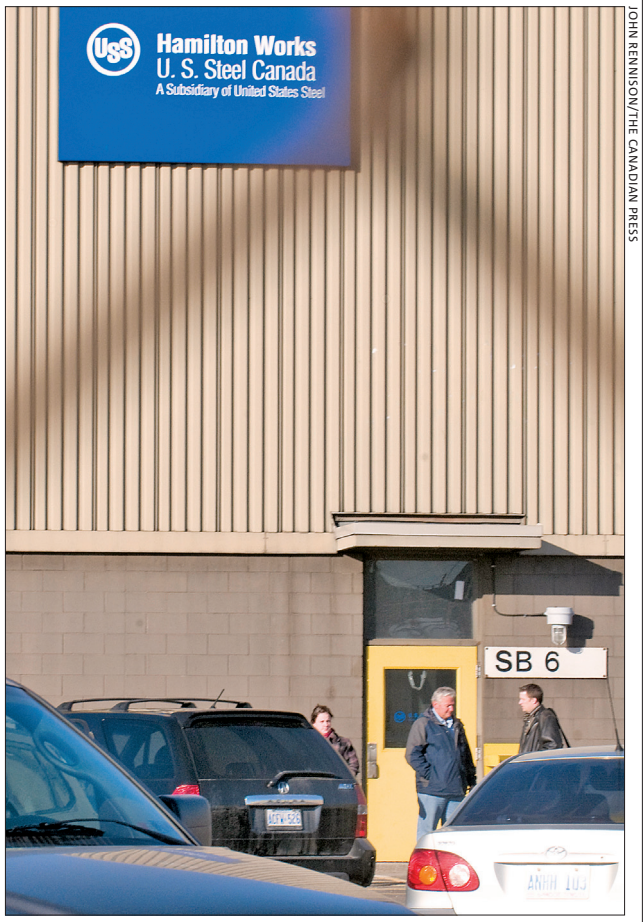
Ontario loaned Stelco $100 million as part of its restructuring in 2005, money McGuinty says he still believes will be paid back.

He also says these most recent job losses reinforce the government's obligations to help workers affected by what he calls "perhaps the most challenging time in many generations."

McGuinty says it shows the planned $18-billion deficit over two years is the right move because it will give the government additional resources.

NDP critic Paul Miller calls the Stelco closure a "shocking blow" and an example of what happens when a country's base industries are sold to foreign buyers. Layoffs in the auto, forestry and industrial sectors have cost tens of thousands of jobs in recent years in Canada's manufacturing heartland.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



JOHN RENNISON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Employees stand outside U.S. Steel's Hamilton Works yesterday after the company announced it will temporarily shut down.

Comedian's timing off with McGuinty prank

ONTARIO Single Girl struck out yesterday because of bad timing.

Television comedian Geri Hall's attempt to mock Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty at the provincial legislature fell flat when she interrupted him fielding reporters' questions about job layoffs.

In character as Single Girl from the CBC show "This Hour Has 22 Minutes," Hall was attempting to poke fun at McGuinty's new rule requiring reporters to stand five feet back when they question him.

"I'm going to come a little bit closer and you tell me when you feel nervous," she said.

But there were few laughs after she walked in-to the middle of questions on U.S. Steel's decision to shut down the former Stelco mills in Ontario.

New Democrat Peter Kormos, who was visibly angry at Hall's routine, was on the outside of the media scrum yelling that thousands of layoffs were no joking matter.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TOM HANSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Geri Hall

Williams defends minister

HEALTH Premier Danny Williams defended his embattled health minister yesterday amid growing calls for his resignation after an inquiry concluded a failure in accountability contributed to Newfoundland's botched breast cancer testing scandal.

"I don't think there's anybody in my caucus that would be as capable of handling this firestorm ... as Minister (Ross) Wiseman," Williams said.

Willams added he won't ask for Wiseman's resignation.

The premier's comments came a day after an inquiry reported on how at least 386 men and women had their breast cancer tests botched from 1997 to 2005. THE CANADIAN PRESS

TORONTO HYDRO PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM UPDATE

On January 30, Toronto Hydro-Electric System Limited announced that it was suspending all normal operations and undertaking an expedited program to check every handwell in the City of Toronto.

Crews have completed their work and have inspected more than 11,700 handwells and 39,000 streetlight poles. Mobile voltage sweeps will continue as part of Toronto Hydro's ongoing monitoring of its electrical assets.

Public safety continues to be our priority. We continue to ask that the public be cautious around any electrical equipment and be aware of utility fixtures that are in your path.

Toronto Hydro urges anyone who is concerned about contact voltage in their neighbourhood to stay clear of the area and to immediately call our **dedicated hotline at 416-222-3773**.

For more information, please visit **www.torontohydro.com/voltageinspection**

toronto hydro electric system

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Shootings rock Vancouver
Gunfire across Metro Vancouver Tuesday night has left two dead, two injured and one home riddled with bullets following four separate incidents. RCMP Cpl. Dale Carr said it was too early in the investigation to link the incident to gangs or drugs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nuclear safety group downplays recent spill

CHALK RIVER A group of environmental activists is urging tougher standards for the amount of radioactive tritium allowed in drinking water.

Members of the Tritium Awareness Project say limits for the substance — which occurs naturally but is also a byproduct of Canada's nuclear reactors — are far higher than in other jurisdictions and should be lowered.

1,000

Michael Binder, commission chairman of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Council, said releases of tritium from Chalk River are 1,000 times lower than the internationally accepted limit.

They also say that a recent spill of heavy water at the Chalk River, Ont., reactor released a large quantity of tritium into the air.

The Canadian Nuclear Safety Council has said there was a small release of tritium well within safety limits.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

HANDOUT

An undated family handout photo of Ashley Smith, who took her own life in a federal institution on Oct. 19, 2007. The photo was taken before she was incarcerated

Mother pleads for further investigation into suicide

CRIME The mother of a young woman who choked to death while prison guards refused to intervene is demanding they be held to account — along with the bosses and "faceless bureaucrats" whose orders they followed.

Coralee Smith demanded through tears that the federal government allow the correctional investigator to finish what he started and name those responsible for her daughter Ashley's death.

The 19-year-old from Moncton, N.B., strangled herself with a strip of cloth on Oct. 19, 2007, in an isolation cell in Kitchener as guards looked on.

Correctional investigator Howard Sapers reported Tuesday that Smith's "entirely preventable" death continued a "disturbing and well-documented pattern of deaths in custody."

Coralee Smith's lawyer, Julian Falconer, said a lawsuit is possible.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

TASER The lawyer for the Polish government has accused a Mountie testifying at a public inquiry of collaborating with other officers and lying under oath to justify his use of a Taser. Const. Kwesi Millington immediately denied he made up anything in his testimony.

COURT The judicial thinking that opened the door to same-sex marriage in Canada could result in legalized polygamy, two evangelical Christian organizations, the Institute for Canadian Values and the Canada Family Action Coalition, are warning. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sabre-rattling over fund

Disagreement over a $3-billion fund to quickly stimulate Canada's sputtering economy is escalating into a standoff between Conservatives and Liberals that could force an election.

"I see no reason why the Prime Minister would make it an issue."
Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff

Yesterday, in the latest twist in this showdown, Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff said the Liberals will put forward a motion in Parliament next week requiring the government to list the departments and programs on which the $3 billion will be spent.

Igantieff repeated that he has no intention of giving the government a "complete blank cheque."

But he suggested the upcoming Liberal motion offers the Conservatives a possible way out of the impasse.

"I see no reason why the Prime Minister would make it an issue," Igantieff said when asked if he was willing to force an election over the $3 billion.

But a spokesman for Prime Minister Stephen Harper says the Liberals are simply playing politics with the current economic crisis.

Kory Teneycke says the Tory government has no problem detailing after the fact how the money is spent but it does not intend to produce an itemized list in advance for the Liberals and other opposition parties.

Harper has said the issue is a matter of confidence in his minority government and has warned that opposition parties could face an election if they refuse to approve the fund.

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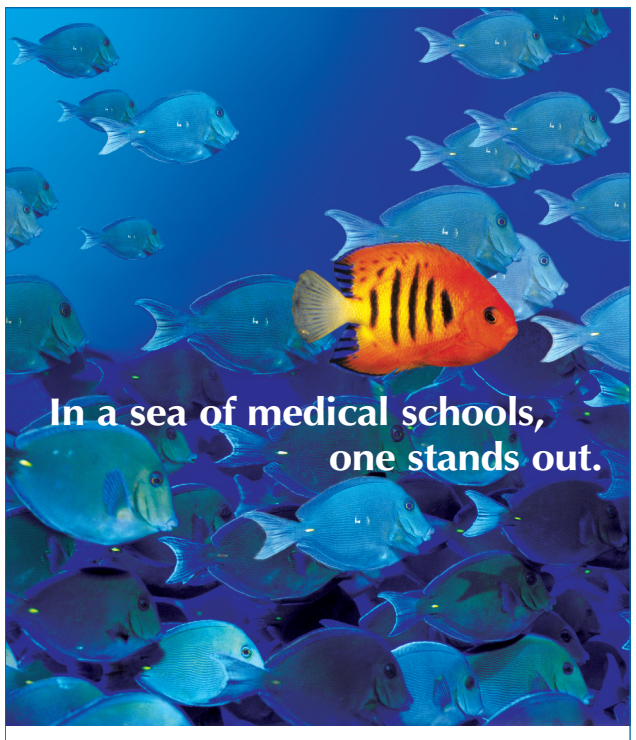

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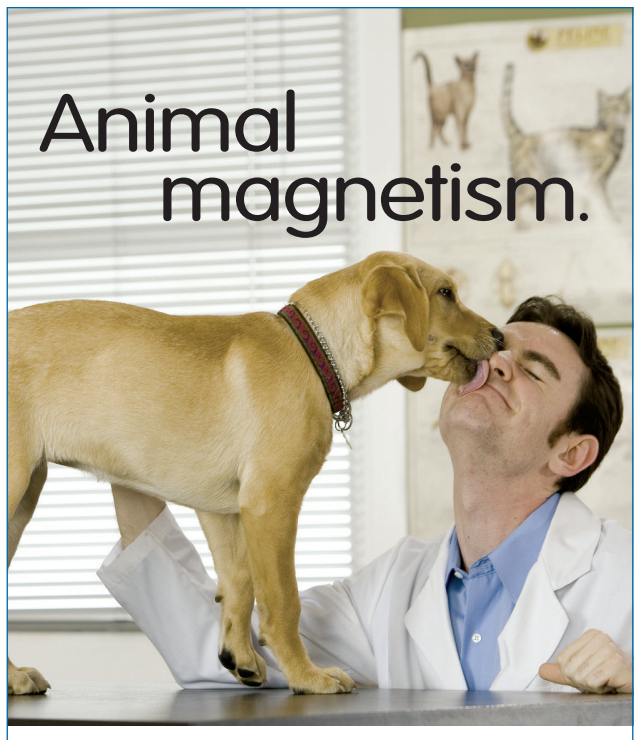

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Come to our School of Veterinary Medicine Information Seminar, Saturday, March 14, 10:00 am Hotel Novotel Toronto North York

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British PM warns against protectionism

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said yesterday an "economic hurricane" has swept the world but any trade protectionist instincts must be resisted. In a formal address to a joint session of the U.S. Congress, Brown said that the two nations must bring about change. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Sudan suspends U.K. charities

Two British aid agencies — Oxfam GB and Save the Children UK — say the Sudanese government has asked them to suspend operations in parts of the country, including Darfur. The requests come on the same day an international court issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, left, on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'I was prepared for it': Wife

WIDOW Her eyes welling with tears as she contemplated a future without her husband, the grieving widow of one of the three latest soldiers killed in Afghanistan bravely came forward yesterday and said she all but knew the man she called her "powerhouse" would die serving his country.

Mishelle Brown

The recently married couple, who have four children, talked at length about death before he deployed in September, said Mishelle Brown, wife of Warrant Officer Dennis Brown.

"I was expecting this. I was prepared for it. Dennis and I talked about it often," she said. She told an interviewer months ago: "I expect my husband to die; I just hope he doesn't."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cpl. Dany Fortin

Cpl. Kenneth O'Quinn

Warrant Officer Dennis Brown

Three soldiers killed

Latest deaths bring Canadian toll to 111

Three Canadian soldiers killed in a massive roadside bomb attack began their final journey home yesterday after a solemn night-time ramp ceremony at Kandahar Airfield.

Warrant Officer Dennis Raymond Brown, Cpl. Dany Olivier Fortin and Cpl. Kenneth Chad O'Quinn were killed Tuesday when their armoured vehicle was struck in the district of Arghandab, an area that until recently was considered calmer than its more volatile southern neighbours.

Spring offensive?

- The Taliban appear to be moving weapons into Arghandab province, moving from a winter campaign towards a summer campaign or spring offensive.

The soldiers were part of a quick-reaction team that responded to a report of an improvised explosive device along one of the main roadways in the district, which is often used as a transit point for Taliban fighters coming down from the mountains toward the city.

The explosion occurred as the vehicle was making its way back to the provincial reconstruction base in the city, around sunset.

Tuesday's deaths bring to 111 the total number of Canadian soldiers who have died since 2002 as part of the mission in Afghanistan. Two Canadian aid workers and a diplomat have also been killed.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ayatollah blasts Obama's policies

TEHRAN Iran's supreme leader yesterday criticized what he called U.S. President Barack Obama's "unconditional" support for Israel, saying he was following the same mistaken policies as the Bush administration.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters, said Obama spoke of change but supported Israel's three-week offensive in the Gaza Strip that killed 1,300 Palestinians. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Four Canadians hurt in U.S. crash

ROLLOVER A 20-year-old Canadian woman was briefly hospitalized after she and three other Canadians were injured when their van rolled over on icy Interstate 94 near Rothsay, Minn. Jenna Lane of Hamilton was airlifted from the scene Tuesday.

Three others were taken to hospital by ambulance. Five other young adult Canadians were in the van. They weren't hurt.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Japanese PM's reading blunders spark study spree

BUNGLED Reading Japanese isn't easy — even for the Japanese.

Take Prime Minister Taro Aso. He has made so many public blunders that an opposition legislator tried to give him a reading test during a televised session of parliament.

Tricky

- Just reading a Japanese newspaper requires knowledge of about 2,000 characters. Another 50,000 are less common but useful to recognize.

The Japanese leader bungled the word for "frequent," calling Japan-China exchanges "cumbersome" instead. Another time, he misread the word "toshu" (follow), saying "fushu" – or stench – and sounded as if he were saying government policy "stinks."

While the media and Aso's political rivals have been quick to heap ridicule, many Japanese have seen a bit more of themselves in Aso's goofs than they would like to admit. Since his missteps, books designed to improve reading ability have become all the rage.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

KYRGYZSTAN A reporter and vocal government critic in Kyrgyzstan was stabbed and beaten in an attack that opposition parties described yesterday as an attempt to stamp out freedom of expression. Syrgak Abdyldayev, a journalist with the Reporter-Bishkek weekly, was stabbed repeatedly by four assailants after leaving his office Tuesday evening, the newspaper's editor, Turat Akimov, said.

NETHERLANDS A faulty flight instrument aboard a Turkish jetliner lowered the plane's air speed, setting off warning signals in the cockpit and prompting the pilots to try to accelerate before it crashed in the Netherlands as it was coming in to land at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport on Feb. 25, officials said yesterday. Nine people were killed, including the pilots. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment & Views

Comment

The science of splitting

Relating

Steve Collins

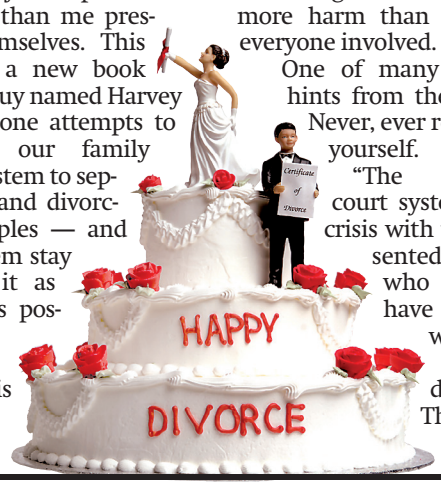
metronews.ca/collins

Anyone who knows me is probably just as baffled as I am to see me writing about what the experts call "man-woman stuff." Relationships baffle me. My good ones have felt a lot like luck, and nothing I write on the subject should be construed as advice, or even a clue.

In January, numerous media outlets advised us of "D-Day" (Jan. 8 or thereabouts), which, according to divorce lawyers, is the single biggest annual day for divorce filings. This month, then, another pile of people, maybe even people reading this, are adjusting to fresh existhood.

And again, I've got nothing. I've never been divorced, a happy circumstance I attribute almost entirely to never having married. This is of little use to most people facing a split now. (My friends also seldom thank me for asking them to imagine, just for a moment, what kind of an ex-wife their fiancée would make.)

Happily, a couple of better sources than me present themselves. This month, a new book from a guy named Harvey Brownstone attempts to explain our family court system to separating and divorcing couples — and help them stay out of it as much as possible.



And who is this Brownstone to judge? As it happens, a sitting judge of the Ontario Court of Justice, who has presided over 14 years of family court cases.

In Tug of War: A Judge's Verdict on Separation, Custody Battles, and the Bitter Realities of Family Court, Brownstone gives an insider's view of the legal machinery and warns of an overloaded court system where protracted, hurt-fuelled litigation often does more harm than good to everyone involved.

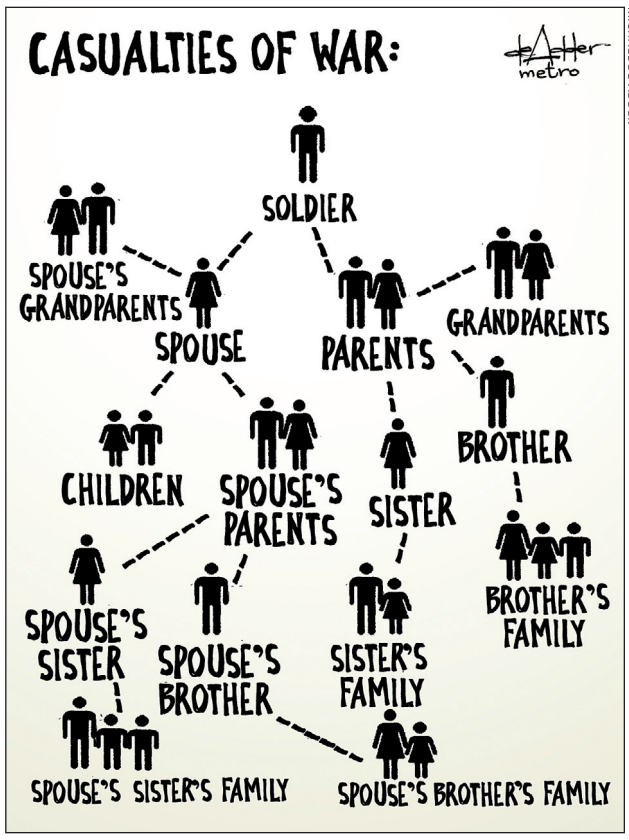
One of many helpful hints from the bench: Never, ever represent yourself.

"The family court system is in crisis with unrepresented people who don't have a clue what they are doing. They don't understand that this is not Judge Judy," Brownstone told the Toronto Star.

Also new on the Canadian split-up scene is ChangingLanes.ca. The website is the creation of communications consultant Michelle Halsey, who encountered a paucity of reliable information and advice during her own separation, and wanted to help others with advice on finances, parenting, and personal stories of divorce and separation.

Discussion forums are categorized by different stages of breakup, from contemplating separation to the blended family. It's early days yet for the site, but already most participants in the forums seem to be women. Where are the separated and divorced men? Probably still trying to figure out what the hell happened. I know I would be.

Steve Collins offers his best guesses on relationships for Metro every two weeks.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Views

Slow-food movement just tastes better

Mark Trealout
Slow-food farmer

Slow food is an easy concept. It can be described in three words: Good, clean, and fair.

The food must taste good (otherwise the slow movement would be cut abruptly short), be produced in a clean manner (think organic vs. chemical input, food miles, water quality), and the price must be fair to both producer and consumer (ideally with few hands in between grower and eater).

But for far too many, slow food is a difficult concept. This is because the average urbanite has no idea how to raise a pig, harvest wheat, or store the summer's bounty for winter use. Heck, the average urbanite doesn't even know someone who knows how to do these things anymore.

In just six decades, western culture has moved far away from our food sources. In doing so we have given control of our food to large corporations, whose mandate is not to feed people, but to maximize profits. This has led to non-labelled experimentations with the foods we find on the shelves of our markets, rampant use of genetically-modified foods and intensively-raised livestock with dependency on "medicated feed."

Tragically, this corporate approach to food has also displaced tens of thousands of farmers in developing countries from the land that has been in their families for generations.

The need to rethink, revitalize and reinvent our food systems has never been more urgent than it is right now.

Slow food is about regaining control of our food systems by once again growing (or purchasing) good, clean, fair foods. Foods grown with the intention of feeding people, not making profits.

Slow Food International now has more than 85,000 active members and supporters in more than 130 countries. Eat slow. It tastes better.

Mark Trealout manages a small farm in Ontario and organizes a group of growers whose produce regularly supplies fine dining establishments in Toronto.

What can you do?

More info at toronto.slowfood.ca

- Develop relationships with people you trust to produce the food for you and your family. Join a community-shared agriculture program in your area — just Google it.
- Become involved in your local farmers' market to ensure this market is meeting the needs of your local community.
- Ask questions about the origins of everything you eat, and don't be satisfied until you get definite answers.
- Frequent those restaurants that ask these questions, too — many fine dining establishments will openly boast their local, fresh produce.
- Think global, purchase local.

Letters

Manners matter, even on the sidewalk

Re: Anne Hines (Manners matter, even in a recession, March 2)

This was a great article on manners.

What we need is a series of articles reminding people how to walk politely when the sidewalks and other pedestrian areas are crowded.

When I grew up, the school systems and our parents taught us how to walk politely and respectfully. Mobility etiquette is so important. There is a mobility convention that applies to walking. If one does not want to practise safe and considerate walking, he or she should not be allowed out of the home without an educated escort.

I know most basics, but very few others do, including the politicians and mobility "experts" in our public services.

NICK BIRD, RICHMOND HILL

Shed excess baggage instead of raising taxes

In these days of job layoffs, pay freezing, and so on, why is it that we never hear about our government getting rid of excess baggage?

Why do we never hear of anyone from the government taking a pay cut, pay freeze like the rest of the general public?

Why is it that Mayor David Miller only thinks of hiking already too-high taxes and the TTC talks about higher fares, but we never hear anything about layoffs or pay freezes from those two sectors?

Enough is enough. People should stand up for their rights and stop letting these things happen.

Wake up, Torontonians, and do something about it!

BRENDA MCDONALD, ETOBICOKE

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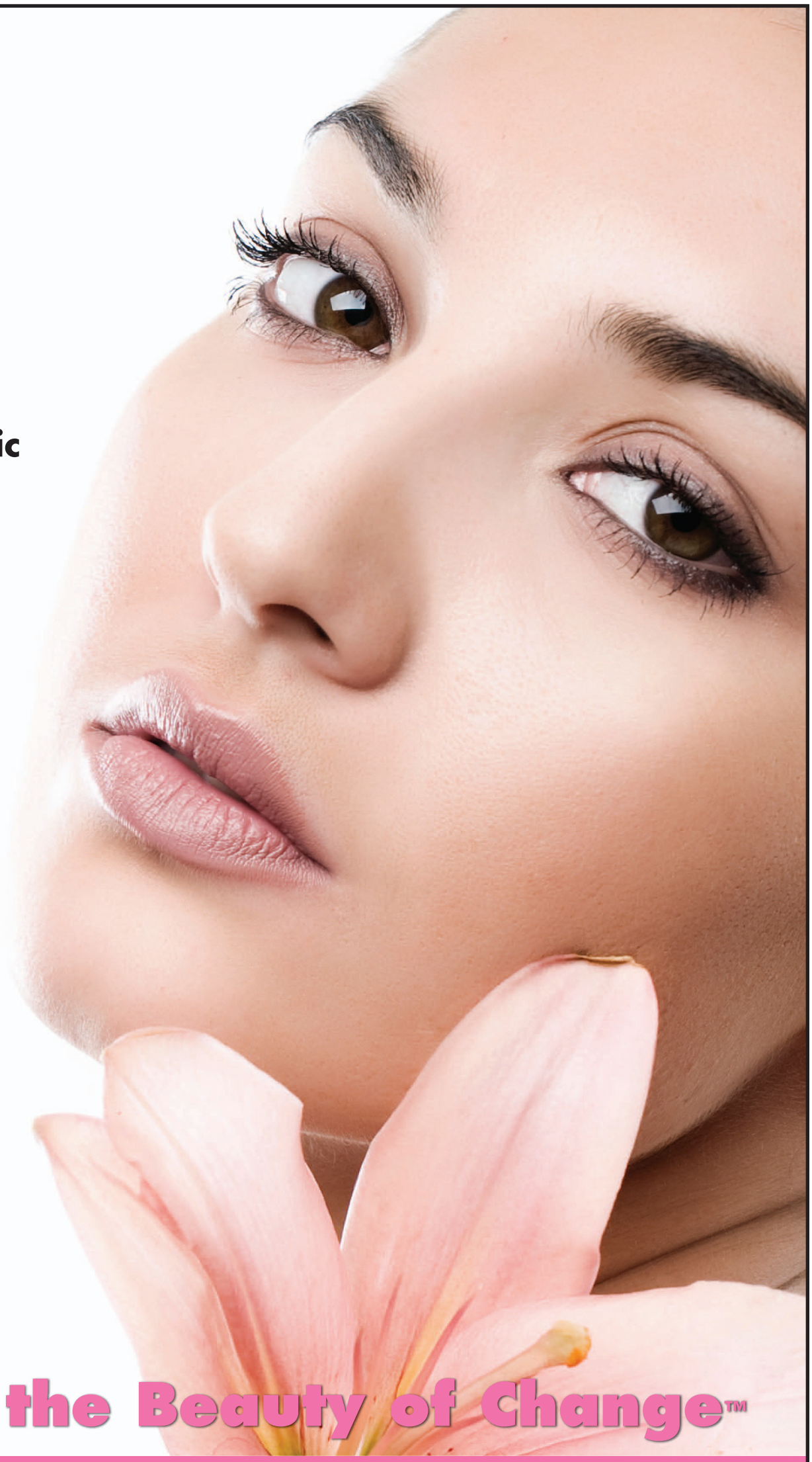

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Ford to cut $10 billion in debt with cash, equity offer
Ford Motor Co. said yesterday it will try to eliminate up to $10.4 billion US of its debt by offering debt holders cash and stock as the troubled automaker continues to restructure amid a severe automotive sales downturn. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business

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Business in brief

GOLD Agnico-Eagle Mines Ltd., a Toronto-based gold producer, says it has raised its estimate of gold reserves by eight per cent to a record 18.1 million ounces after a successful exploration program last year. Agnico-Eagle said yesterday it spent $72 million US on exploration in 2008, including $38 million on development projects. Agnico operates the LaRonde and Bousquet mines in Quebec. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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China gives markets hope

Energy, mining stocks rise

Stock markets rose yesterday as traders grasped hope that Chinese leaders will take new measures to bolster the world's third-largest economy — and help lift other countries out of a serious downturn.

Investors were also heartened by data suggesting a reviving factory sector in China.

The Toronto market benefited from rising energy and mining stocks on hopes China will hike demand and jolt commodity shares back to life.

China's National People's Congress convenes its annual session today and investors hope for a new stimulus package, in addition to promised spending worth $585 billion US outlined in November.

Meanwhile, official figures indicated Chinese manufacturing contracted again in February, but at a slower rate.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Indexes rebound

- The S&P/TSX ran ahead 183.13 points to 7,814.75 after three days of losses.
- Dow Jones snapped a five-session losing streak, closing up 149.82 points at 6,875.84.
- Nasdaq gained 32.73 points to 1,353.74.

Virgin The end

MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shoppers exit the Virgin Megastore in San Francisco. After two decades of rocking the music world, the six Virgin Megastores in the United States will shut their doors this summer. The stores are profitable, but its owners felt they could get higher rent from new tenants.

Watchdog begins Melnyk hearing

BIOVAIL The Ontario Securities Commission yesterday opened proceedings against Biovail Corp. founder Eugene Melnyk.

The Ottawa Senators owner denies wrongdoing and the OSC has set aside 17 days for a panel to determine whether he misled investors about Biovail's operational and financial performance.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mavrix reports lower revenue

FUND Money manager Mavrix Fund Management recorded lower revenue for the fourth quarter of 2008 as assets under management declined by 60 per cent. It said quarterly revenue dropped by 48 per cent to $1.6 million from $3.1 million a year ago.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Barbados $195 — Travel Mar 9 - Mar 16/wg + taxes & fees $264

Airfares

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INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and 4 nights 4.5-star accom on the Las Vegas Strip. Departs Mar29/swg/wg.

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Boston St Patrick's Day $649 — The Fairmont Copley Plaza Boston + taxes & fees $123
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Spain, Morocco & Portugal $2299 — Spain Morocco & Portugal taxes & fees included
INCLUDES all accom, transport, some meals, tour leader & local guides on this 16-day group tour of Spain, Morocco & Portugal. VISIT Madrid, Granada, Fez, Marrakesh, Casablanca, Seville, Lisbon & more. Various departures in Nov/tfg.

TRAFALGAR

Sun Holidays

PUERTO PLATA 4-STAR $348
Casa Marina + taxes & fees $315
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Cancun 7 Nights $468 — Caribbean Princess + taxes & fees $267
INCLUDES roundtrip airfare, transfers and 7 nights 3-star all-inclusive accom. Departs Mar 8/sgn/5g.

Punta Cana 4-Star $597 — VIK Hotel Arena Blanca + taxes & fees $315
INCLUDES roundtrip airfare, transfers and 7 nights 4-star all-inclusive accom. Departs Mar 8/nol/c6.

El Salvador 4-Star $747 — Royal Decameron Salinitas + taxes & fees $237
INCLUDES roundtrip airfare, transfers and 7 nights 4-star all-inclusive accom. Departs Mar 16/nol/ts.

Bahamas 5-Star $885 — Atlantis Paradise Island Beach Tower + taxes & fees $168
INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and 4 nights 5-star accom on famous Paradise Island. Departs Apr 20/wsv/ws. ADD Stuart's Cove 2-tank dive from $145. BONUS book by Mar 9 and receive a $200** cash-back rebate.

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TICO

Warner back with Cards
Quarterback Kurt Warner is staying with the Arizona Cardinals, agreeing to a two-year, $23-million US contract yesterday. Warner had made a highly-publicized free agent visit to division rival San Francisco earlier in the week. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Manny finally comes to terms

Free agent outfielder Manny Ramirez, his agent Scott Boras, and the Los Angeles Dodgers reached a preliminary agreement on a two-year, $45-million US contract yesterday. The deal is contingent on Ramirez passing a physical. In last year's National League playoffs, he batted .520 with four homers, 10 RBIs, nine runs and 11 walks in eight games.
METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Musical goalies, but no big surprises

TheHockeyNews

Ryan Kennedy
thehockeynews.com

While big names like Olli Jokinen, Mark Recchi and Bill Guerin went elsewhere on NHL trade deadline day, Leafs Nation must be content with a bunch of upcoming draft selections and the knowledge the Toronto Marlies also got some depth.

Of course, the most curious news of the day was the acquisition of beleaguered Senators goalie Martin Gerber, ostensibly brought in to replace starter Vesa Toskala, who has been shut down for the season with a groin injury. The question that must be asked, of course, is why? Curtis Joseph and Justin Pogge may not be great netminders this season, but in case the Leafs brass hasn't noticed, there's not a lot of hope of making a playoff run this year.

Brian Burke claimed Gerber would help the Buds win some games and, fair enough, that may be true. But the dark side of me would like to point out that losing a bunch of games from here on out and getting closer to the top of the draft board wouldn't be the worst thing in the world.

But I digress. The two major deals involving the Leafs yesterday saw forwards Nik Antropov and Dominic Moore shipped out for draft picks. Antropov will join the New York Rangers on Broadway and netted the Buds a second-round selection and a conditional pick. Moore, one of the team's best forwards, will take his feisty game down the QEW to Buffalo, where the Sabres are life and death to make the playoffs. The Leafs received another second-round pick in return, boosting their total to two from none.

Antropov

In one of the stranger deals of the day, Toronto acquired a fourth-round pick from Tampa Bay, bringing the selection haul to four. The actual deal went as such: Toronto sent minor league defenceman Richard Petiot to the Lightning in exchange for goalie Olaf Kolzig, defencemen Andy Rogers and Jamie Heward and the aforementioned pick. All three are free agents this summer and none will factor into the Leafs' plans. Kolzig and Heward, in fact, are both injured long term and Kolzig will likely retire at season's end.

Moore

So why make the trade? Ah, the answer as old as time — money. The Buds have tons of it, Tampa Bay not so much. Essentially, the deal can be broken down in the simplest of terms: Toronto paid a couple hundred grand to acquire a draft selection.

And when your team is so rich that it's building its own condos, why not?

Deadline day
Notable deals

- The Calgary Flames acquired Olli Jokinen and a third-round pick from the Phoenix Coyotes in exchange for Matthew Lombardi, Brandon Prust and a conditional first-round pick.
- The Los Angeles Kings traded Patrick O'Sullivan to the Hurricanes, who turned around and sent O'Sullivan and a draft pick to the Edmonton Oilers for Erik Cole.
- The Pittsburgh Penguins added forward Bill Guerin from the New York Islanders for a conditional draft pick.
- The Ottawa Senators acquired goalie Pascal Leclaire and a second rounder from Columbus for centre Antoine Vermette.
- The Boston Bruins acquired forward Mark Recchi and defenceman Steve Montador.

Jays OK in beating USA

MLB Strong pitching by Brad Mills and Matt Clement allowed the Blue Jays to rally against the United States WBC team in exhibition play yesterday. Mills and Clement combined for six one-hit innings and minor leaguer Brien Dopirak's two-run single in the ninth gave the Blue Jays a 6-5 victory.

Streak ends, but Man U wins

SOCCER Edwin van der Sar lost his record-breaking run, but Manchester United won 2-1 at Newcastle to move seven points clear atop the EPL yesterday. After stretching his record to 1,311 minutes without conceding a goal, 'keeper Van der Sar gave up a ninth-minute lead, only for Wayne Rooney and Dimitar Berbatov to make up for it. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA Wade out-heats Suns

WILFREDO LEE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dwyane Wade drives past Suns guard Jason Richardson in Miami last night. Wade finished with 35 points and 16 assists as Miami won 135-129.

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Buffalo 5 Montreal 1
Detroit at Colorado

NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS
Cleveland 91 Milwaukee 73
Miami 135 Phoenix 129
Boston 115 New Jersey 111
Atlanta 109 New York 105
Oklahoma City 88 Washington 83
Golden State at Chicago
Houston at Utah
San Antonio at Dallas
Indiana at Portland
Memphis at L.A. Clippers

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416.925.4386 ext. 239
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C&W Children's & Women's Health Centre of British Columbia
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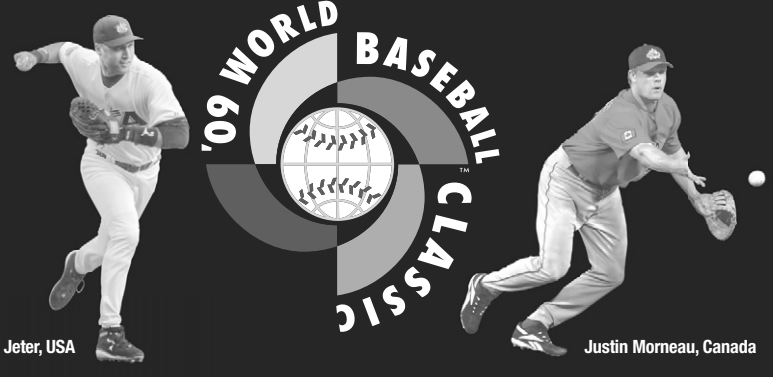

Derek Jeter, USA
Justin Morneau, Canada

Get your tickets now to see Canada take on Italy, Venezuela, and the United States.

March 7-11 at ROGERS CENTRE

SCHEDULE

Game 1	Saturday, March 7 @ 2PM	Canada vs. United States
Game 2	Saturday, March 7 @ 8PM	Italy vs. Venezuela
Game 3	Sunday, March 8 @ 8PM	Game 1 Winner vs. Game 2 Winner
Game 4	Monday, March 9 @ 6:30PM	Game 1 Loser vs. Game 2 Loser
Game 5	Tuesday, March 10 @ 5PM	Game 4 Winner vs. Game 3 Loser
Game 6	Wednesday, March 11 @ 6:30PM	Game 3 Winner vs. Game 5 Winner

Tickets available now at the Rogers Centre™ Box Office Gate 9, call 416-341-1234 or go to worldbaseballclassic.com.

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Opportunity knocks

West Toronto Support for Seniors is seeking cyclists for its Meals on 2Wheelers campaign. Cyclists must be available to deliver meals Monday to Friday, between 10:30 a.m. and noon. To volunteer, contact Joanne Alfonsi at 416-653-3535, ext. 247, or email jalfonsi@wtss.org. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Community Spirit

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

Building team morale

Firms use corporate volunteering to energize staff

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

Community service is becoming the most popular new corporate team building exercise, says the executive director of Volunteer Toronto.

"Instead of when you stand in a circle and see if someone will catch you when you fall backwards," said Deborah Gardner with a chuckle.

Many companies have a commitment in their mission statements to citizenship and volunteer work and others simply see it as a way to build team morale.

Shannon Wetmore, an employee at UPS Canada, has been involved with Parkdale Project Read, an adult literacy program, for about two years.

Recently, as part of the company's corporate citizenship program, she got a group of employees together to go and spend a Saturday morning at the west-end facility, cleaning and organizing the space.

"We were doing the things that the people who work at Project Read don't have time to do," she said.

Guy Ewing, a staff member at Project Read, said the event "transformed" the space and was a "very powerful" experience for both the volunteers and Project Read staff.

"You realize that people are allies in trying to do good things in our society," he said.

"You realize that people are allies in trying to do good things in our society." Guy Ewing

Many of the UPS managers from across the country who were involved in the Saturday morning cleanup mentioned that, upon return to their home provinces, they would seek out their own opportunities to continue volunteer work, said Ewing.

"It sort of energized us," he said.

As a corporation, UPS is committed to giving back to the community, said Doug Appleby, the company's community relations manager.

"We support volunteer activities throughout the course of the year. We've been involved in a number of different activities," he said.

The next major project for UPS is a women's build this month with the Toronto chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Many companies, including UPS and SAP, a software solutions company, participate in the annual North American Month of Service in October.

Last October, more than 60 per cent of SAP employees across Canada donated more than 2,950 volunteer hours. Their service included sorting food at food banks, preparing meals for needy families and painting and renovating rooms in community centres and schools.

Not only do communities and organizations benefit from corporate volunteer programs, the companies gain happier employees, Gardner said.

"Employees who volunteer, one study showed, are three times more likely to stay with the company," she said.

For information on how you or your company can get involved, visit volunteertoronto.on.ca or volunteer.ca.

Shannon Wetmore and a colleague from UPS work on a cleanup at Parkdale Project Read, a west-end adult literacy centre.

BREW SOME GOOD WEEK

BE REWARDED

Maxwell House is inviting all Canadians to inject a little good into your day. Get spotted performing a random act of good during Brew Some Good Week, March 2 – 8, and be rewarded instantly!

BREW SOME GOOD **TODAY**

Look for the **Maxwell House** Brew Gooders Team here:

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- TD Centre
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Now roasted with premium quality 100% Arabica beans.

Be inspired at brewsomegood.ca

Happy anniversary, Toronto!
City Hall is opening its doors to residents from noon to 9 p.m. on March 6 in honour of Toronto's 175th anniversary. An exhibition hall will feature art installations, dance, music and more. Free. For more, go to toronto.ca/175/schedule_events.htm. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Spring Fun

Festival in bloom

Canada Blooms, the country's largest flower and garden festival, returns to the South Building of the Metro Convention Centre from March 18-21. More than 20 gardens will be on display. Seminars, demonstrations and workshops daily. For more, go to canadablooms.com or call 416-477-8655. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SPECIAL FEATURES EDITOR: STEPHANIE.BOMBA@METRONEWS.CA

CENTRE FOR URBAN ECOLOGY PHOTO

March Break camps offer everything from tobogganing at Humber Arboretum's Nature Camp to working in the kitchen as part of the Cooking Capers Camp at Montgomery's Inn.

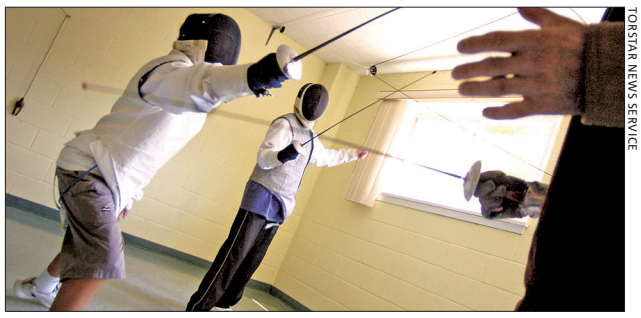
A worthwhile break

City's camps designed to keep children busy while teaching them to be creative

NOELLE MUNARETTO
for Metro Canada

Kids may be out of school during March Break, but that doesn't mean creative and exciting learning has to stop too.

These March Break camps will keep children busy during their week off, while also exposing them to new ideas and different educational concepts. Whether they're into art, sports, nature or even cooking, kids will have their both bodies and minds active outside the classroom.



TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The Toronto Fencing Centre is offering a Beginners Fencing Camp.

Harbourfront Centre Portfolio Prep Camp
If your child is interested in pursuing fine arts, either in high school or university, this brand new camp will help them organize their expanding body of work. Campers are encouraged to bring in their own artwork, but they will also develop separate projects for the new portfolio. Aspiring photographers, painters, sculptors, and fashion designers can all benefit from this hands-on experience in artistic organization.
For ages: 12-16
Time: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Cost for the week: $225
Before/after care: Yes
Registration: Online, by fax or by mail
Downloadable forms: Available at harbourfrontcentre.com/camps/marchbreak/registration.cfm

Toronto Fencing Centre Beginners Fencing Camp
This camp's goal is to teach children not only proper fencing techniques, but also the sport's unique history. Budding swashbucklers are introduced to the basics of fencing and are outfitted with full uniforms and épées. In addition, campers will watch footage of great Olympic fencing matches. Parents need not worry either. TFC maintains fencing is one of the least dangerous sports kids can play.
For ages: 8-16
Time: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Cost for the week: $250
Before/after care: No
Registration: By phone at 416-384-1200 or email info@tfc.on.ca
Downloadable forms: Available at tfc.on.ca/

Montgomery's Inn Cooking Capers Camp
Take a trip back in time to 1847, where cooking at this historic inn was done in a large open-hearth kitchen. Each day campers will focus on a different culinary theme: St. Patrick's Day, chocolate, apples and maple. They will work with the inn's staff to reproduce traditional recipes using authentic heritage kitchen tools. Also on the agenda are tours of the inn, history discussions, crafts and indoor/outdoor games. The four sessions can be purchased individually or together.
For ages: 8-11
Time: 1-4 p.m.
Cost per session: $20 plus GST
Before/after care: No
Registration: By phone at 416-394-8113

Humber Arboretum Nature Camp
Operating within the city's 220-acre Humber Arboretum, this nature camp gets kids out of the house and into the wild. The schedule for the week includes chickadee feeding, nature walks, native shelter building, and daily arts and crafts. The highlight of the camp is maple day, where campers will help tap maple trees to harvest syrup. Tobogganing and snowshoeing are weather permitting. Be sure to bundle up the kids in warm clothes since there is a large outdoor component to the camp.
For ages: 5-13
Time: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Cost for the week: $180
Before/after care: Yes
Registration: By phone at 416-675-5009 or mail
Downloadable forms: At humberarboretum.on.ca/marBr.htm

Get creative

Neilson Park Creative Centre and Sherway Gardens have teamed up to offer Artsmartz in the Square creative art workshops. Runs March 16-20, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Sherway Gardens. $5 fee includes art kit. For more, go to sherwaygardens.ca or call 416-621-1070. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Festival focuses on children

ERIC EMIN WOOD
for Metro Canada

Thinking of taking your kids to see a movie, but nothing good is playing?

The Sprockets International Film Festival for Children, which runs this year from April 18-23, will be hosting an advance screening of one of its films, Kung Fu Kid, on March 8.

Established in 1998 by the Toronto International Film Festival Group, Sprockets "brings together the best films from around the world for children and families to enjoy," says Allan Braude, co-director of learning for TIFFG and head programmer of the festival.

"It gives kids an opportunity to see films from all sorts of different countries and gain perspective on different cultures and different ways of life."

Sprockets' attendance has grown from 2,000 people in its first year to almost 18,000 last year. This year, almost 30 features and more than 60 shorts, including Kung Fu Kid, will be screening.

Kung Fu Kid is a Japanese import about a boy from China "who goes to Japan to do his final test and become a kung fu master," says Braude. Once in Japan, "he discovers that something's not quite right, and with a group of friends he fights the evil conglomerate trying to brainwash children through video games."

The film is a "kid's movie" in the sense that children are in the lead role, and it's a story of "cooperation, perseverance and working together for the greater good," says Braude.

"It doesn't talk down to kids — it talks completely at their level and treats them as the intelligent people they are."

During the festival itself, attendees have the opportunity to see films, participate in group activities — including crafts and face-painting — and engage in question and answer sessions with some of the filmmakers.

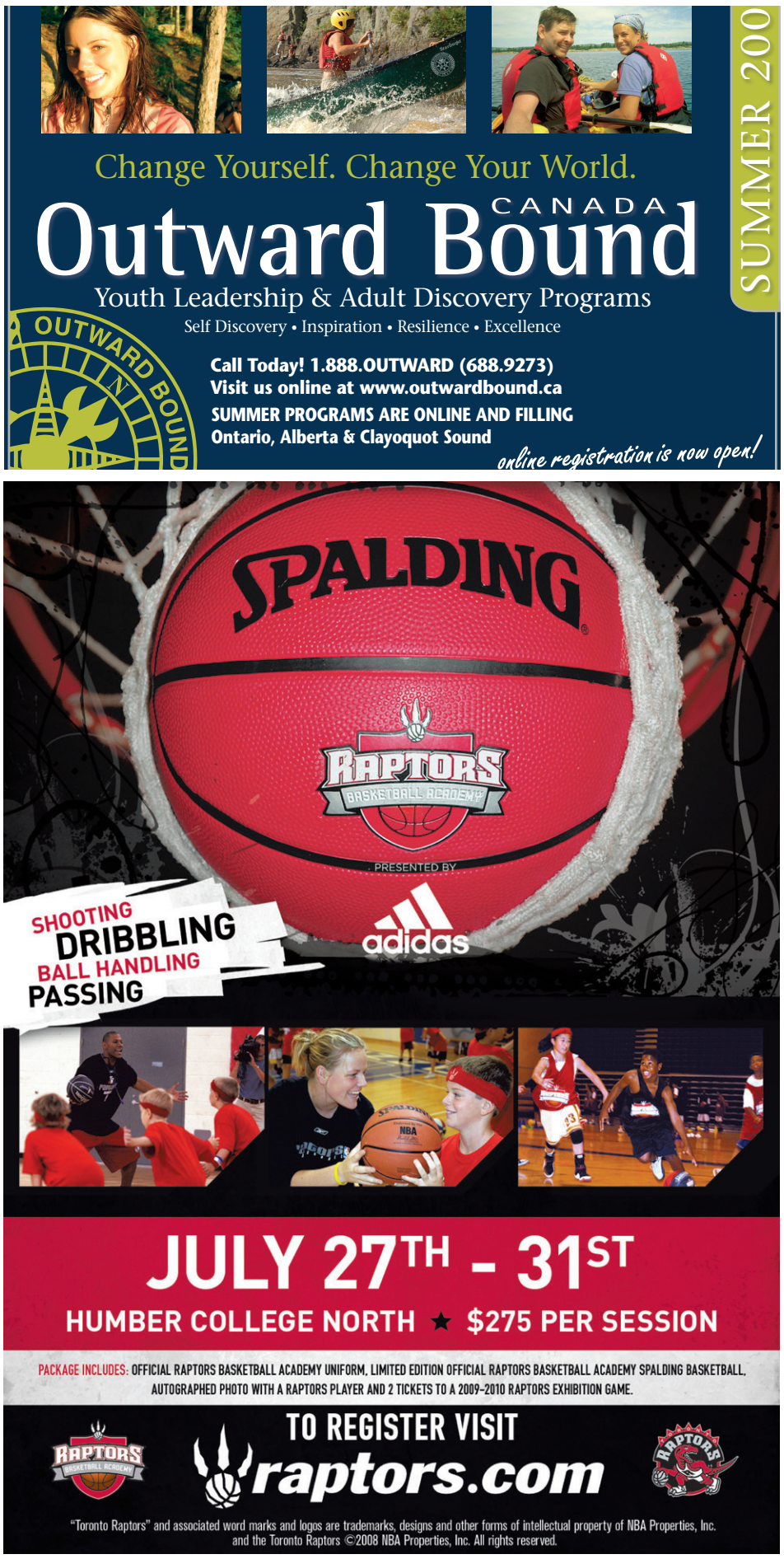
"There's something for kids to do all the time, so there's no need to wait around in line," says Braude.

The advance screening will include a handbook with information about Japan, the film, and an activity.

Kung Fu Kid is showing on March 8 at 12:30 p.m. at the Shephard Grande. For more information, or to order tickets, visit sprockets.ca or call 1-877-968-3456.

PHOTOS BY LEONARD ADAM/WIREIMAGE FOR THE SPROCKETS TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN

The Sprockets International Film Festival for Children also offers group activities for attendees, including crafts and face-painting.



Free fun
This year, the Toronto Public Library branches will host a variety of free special events, including storytellers and magicians, from March 14-20. For more, go to torontopubliclibrary.ca or call 416-393-7131. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Top 10 places to go with the kids

So you're facing a week (in some school districts, 10 days) at home with the kids over March Break holiday. Now's your chance to tour the city's best attractions.

ROGERS CENTRE PHOTO

Spring Fling 2009 runs from March 16-20 at the Rogers Centre.

1. Casa Loma
The historical castle is hosting School's Out — A Tribute to High School Musical and Hannah Montana five times daily. The 25-minute musical show teaches kids a dance from High School Musical, and is followed by the Spring Break Talent Show, which gives wannabe singers a chance to win a Star Idol Award. Portraits in vintage costumes and archery practice are available each day, while magicians and a mascot stroll the castle. Show times: 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2 p.m. & 3 p.m., from March 14 to 22. Cost: Child, $8.25, adult, $15. casaloma.org

2. CN Tower
The quintessential must-visit landmark is featuring four daily performances from Famous People Players. Throughout the day, kids can play Skyscraper Top Trumps tournaments for a chance to win a deck of the popular card game (ages six and up). Show times: Between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., March 16 to 20. Cost: Adults, $21.99; children 4 to 12 years, $14; children under 4, free. Package including Look Out and Glass Floor, $32.99 each. cntower.ca

3. The Bata Shoe Museum
Admire footwear throughout the ages and partake in the museum's Capturing the Winter Olympic Spirit drop-in, winter-themed arts and crafts activities, where kids can make their own mini-inukshuk and pinecone skiers. Times: Between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., March 16 to 20. Cost: $8. batashoemuseum.ca

4. Legislative Building
The 116-year-old architectural delight is hosting parent and child (ages 6 to 12) activities over March Break, including a mock debate that allows kids to don parliamentary costumes, a scavenger hunt, a performance of how a bill becomes law, and the chance to craft a parliamentary mace. Open: Mon. to Fri., 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; also 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Tues. and Thurs., March 16 to 20. Cost: Free (book in advance; 416-325-7500).

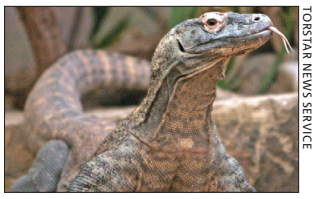
5. Rogers Centre
OK, so you'd prefer to be catching a Jays' game. But you can still appreciate the stadium (and eat dogs) at this year's Spring Fling 2009, when the centre transforms into an indoor carnival featuring 18 rides including the Merry-Go-Round, Ferris Wheel, Hang Glider and Scrambler. Times: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., March 16 to 20. Cost: $17 all day ride ticket (2 years and up); $10 no ride ticket. rogerscentre.com

6. Fort York
This fascinating reproduction of the founding of Toronto in 1793 has various drop-in activities planned over its March Break's March Through Time festivities. Children between the ages of 3 to 12 will have a chance to dress up in historical clothing, march like a soldier, and more. Open: Between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., March 16 to 20. Cost: Adults, $7.62; senior and youth, $3.81; children, $2.86 (children under 3 are free). toronto.ca/culture/museums/fort-york.htm

7. Royal Ontario Museum
You can finally check out the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal and take advantage of the ROM's Egypt Month over March Break. Kids can decipher hieroglyphic messages, assume a traditional Egyptian name and inscribe an amulet with a hieroglyphic symbol in the Ancient Egypt Exploration Area (from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., daily from March 16 to 20). Or drop in on the Mediaeval Fair (11 a.m. to 4 p.m., daily from March 14 to 21). Witness armoured knights compete in a reproduction of a 14th-century tournament (March 21, starting at 11 a.m., bouts continuing all afternoon). Cost: Free with admission. rom.on.ca

8. Hockey Hall of Fame
The ultimate sports shrine is running Tales of the Cup, a slide presentation for kids about the Stanley Cup's adventures around the world. Times: Mon. to Fri., 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. March 16 to 20. Cost: Free with admission. hhof.com

9. Toronto Zoo
No reason to let cold weather keep you from visiting the city's conservation-focused zoo. The tropical pavilions are a warm retreat, and during March Break Spring Fling, gazillions of beautiful butterflies fly free in the Malayan Woods Pavilion. Also during March Break, the zoo has planned an extensive array of extended zookeeper talks for various animals including Komodo dragons and Siberian tigers. Open: March 13 to 22. Cost: Adults, $20; seniors, $14; children 4-12, $12; children under 3, free. torontozoo.com


TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A talk at the Toronto Zoo will feature Komodo dragons.

10. Ontario Science Centre
The centre is hosting a bunch of March Break drop-in activities including Fizzical Fizzicks, the popular travelling troupe of scientists with a show all about motion (four shows daily, March 14 to 22). Daily demonstrations include Cool Science, where you will witness a flower shatter into a million pieces (daily presentations March 14 to 22). March Break hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., March 14 to 21; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., March 22. Cost: Free with admission. ontariosciencecentre.ca

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Get inspired

Indigo's Kidspiration March Break calendar features eco-friendly crafting and themed celebrations from March 16-20. For more, visit chapters.indigo.ca. METRO NEWS SERVICES

events

SUGARBUSH MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL Festivities incl. demonstrations, wagon rides and guided hikes. Pancakes and syrup will be served; samples of sap and syrup are free. Runs from March 7-April 13 at the Kortright Centre for Conservation and Bruce's Mill Conservation Area. Adults $8; children/seniors $5; members free. For more, go to trcaparks.ca/maplesyrup or call 416-667-6299.

PLAY LIKE A PIONEER Learn about life in early Ontario at Black Creek Pioneer Village. Activities incl. learning how maple syrup was made, an all-day pancake breakfast, puppet shows, more. Runs March 14-22, from 10 a.m-4:30 p.m. Adults/seniors, $10; children 5-14, $7; children 4 and under, free. For more, go to blackcreek.ca or call 416-736-1733.

WIZARD WORLD This indoor fun park with rides, stage shows and attractions runs March 15-21, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. in the Better Living Centre at Exhibition Place. Activities incl. a petting zoo, arcades, bumper cars, more. $8; free for children 2 and under. You can also register for the Wizard's Workshop, a 45-minute session where kids learn magic tricks from real magicians. Workshops are $12 ($10 when you register online). For more, call 416-585- 9263 or visit wizardworld.ca.

Kids can learn magic tricks at Wizard World from March 15-21.

PICTURES, PORTRAITS AND POLAROIDS Children and families can create pictures, polaroids and portraits as part of a special exhibition, Yousuf Karsh: Industrial Images, at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. Activities also incl. artist painting demonstrations and circus acts. Runs March 16-20, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Adults, $15; students/seniors, $12; family, $30; children 5 and under, free. For more, call 1-888-213-1121 or visit mcmichael.com.

MUSIC, MADNESS, MAGIC Interactive events incl. hip hop dance lessons and science experiments. Free at the Sheridan Centre, 2225 Erin Mills Parkway, Mississauga. Runs from March 16-20. For more, go to sheridancentre.ca.

TORONTO ART EXPO 2009 More than 300 Canadian and international artists will put their work on display and up for sale at this event. Runs March 19-22 at the Metro Convention Centre. Free. For more, call 1-866-228-4238 or visit torontoartexpo.com.

MARCH BREAK WORKSHOP with the Canadian Opera Company. Participants spend the day preparing for an afternoon performance of Dvorák's Rusalka. Children create their own costumes, learn songs and adapt the story before showing family and friends what they've accomplished. March 20, from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. $25. For kids aged 7-12. For more, go to coc.ca or call 416-306-2392.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO

Kids can sample sap at the Sugarbush Maple Syrup Festival.

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Clockwise from top left: J Fournier, Kelly Grace, Robert Louie, Rob Croxford
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METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Lush, deep reds

Suite Talk

VANESSA GRECO
for Metro Canada

The secret to imaginative design rests no further than the Scarborough Town Centre, where Monarch Group's Red at Equinox condominium proves that practical can be playful.

"People want to come home to a place that inspires them," said model suite designer Kelly Cray of Chapman Design Group. Mixing functionality with urban flair, Cray set out to create a contemporary space for first-time buyers.

While a rich spectrum of cream and chocolate brown is present throughout the unit, bold red accents characterize the one-bedroom suite. A circular light fixture with rings of red and white acrylic draws attention to the dark-wood dining table.

"The fixture is abstract, almost like origami," said Cray, who enjoys clean design highlighted by whimsical accents.

Another one of those accents — an old piece of cork — hangs in the living room above a beige couch. After finding the cork panel in a warehouse, Cray turned the board into artwork by placing it in a red lacquer frame.

"Most people starting out don't have the means to begin their own home art collection," he said. "Making art out of nothing is a great solution."

The quirky wall-piece offsets the room's simple parson-style coffee table finished in a dark-wood stain. Under it, a tight-woven carpet ties in the room. It's thin stripes guide focus towards the window.

"We mixed things up," said Cray who incorporated both textural and polished finishes into the suite's furniture. "It's a social space, so why not try new things?"

Red at Equinox suites can range from 515 to 889 square feet, with prices starting from the $170,000s. For more information, call 416-495-3582 or visit Monarchgroup.net.

The Red at Equinox model suite designer set out to create a contemporary space for first-time buyers.

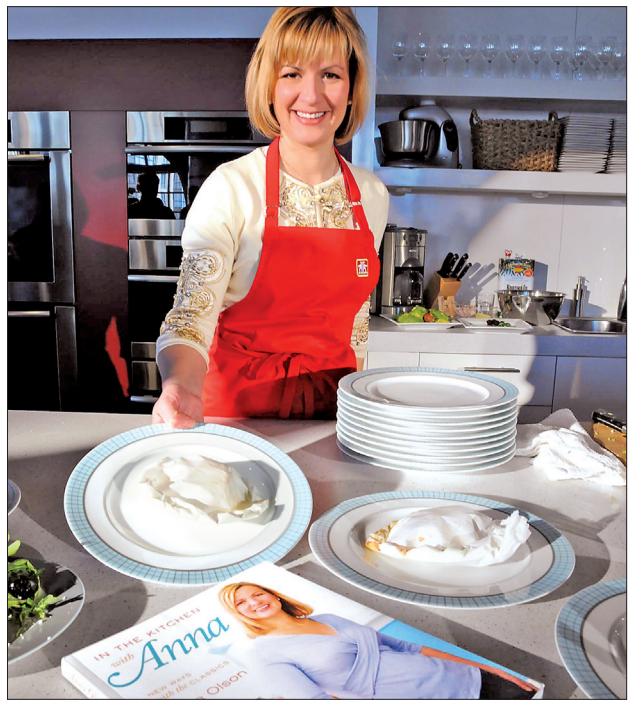
Anna Olson partners with Home Hardware

KITCHEN Home Hardware Stores Limited recently announced an exclusive retail partnership with Food Network host, professional chef and cook book author Anna Olson to bring top-quality kitchen products and solutions to Canadian consumers.

Home Hardware's partnership with Olson is designed to help its dealer-owners grow their share of the kitchen and entertaining category, through product awareness and helpful recommendations from a well-known professional chef. Olson will work with Home Hardware dealers to ensure customers get expert advice within the convenient setting of their local Home Hardware store.

"Creating a warm and inviting kitchen is like building a home. Everyone has a vision of what they want, but most of us need advice to pull it together — which appliances to choose and how to care for them," said Olson. "That's why I am excited to partner with Home Hardware. Home Hardware dealers and staff are equipped with the knowledge and products to help anyone create an inspired living space."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



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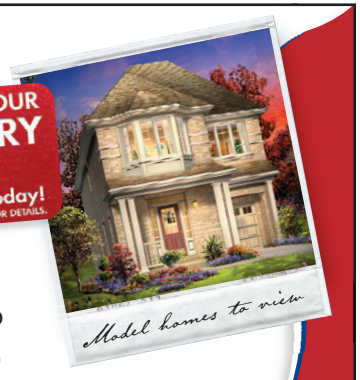

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The Canyon	4302	A	2,094	4	~~$366,990~~	$339,990	$27,000
The Canyon	4403	A	2,094	4	~~$366,990~~	$349,990	$17,000
The Seascape	4304	A	2,082	4	~~$366,990~~	$339,990	$27,000
The Seascape	4404	A	2,082	4	~~$366,990~~	$349,990	$17,000

SINGLES	LOT#	ELEV	SQ. FT.	BDRM	PREV. PRICE	PRICE NOW	SAVINGS
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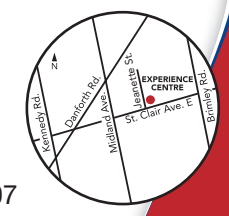

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Decor

Read more in the April issue of STYLE AT HOME magazine.
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At your service

Fresh florals bloom on a delightful tea set

HOME & STYLE Springtime in Paris was the inspiration behind Rosanna Bowles' design for perhaps the prettiest petit déjeuner you'll ever wake up to. Les Girls à Paris four-piece snack and tea set $55, Rosanna, rosannainc.com.

— BRETT WALTHER

Sitting pretty

An unexpected detail makes a statement

HOME & STYLE A clean-lined stool is elevated to statement-piece status with the application of elaborate nail-head detail. Painted wood stool, $1,085, AT Design Group, atdesignhome.com.

— BRETT WALTHER

Lighten up

Wood finishes for a bright, beachy look

HOME & STYLE Bid adieu to blah brown wood. Fresh finishes that serve to lighten the appearance of wood — including bleached, cerused, limed and pickled finishes — lend a wonderfully weathered look that's bright and beachy. Limed turned side table $895, AT Design Group, atdesignhome.com.

— BRETT WALTHER

Pillow talk

Plump, pretty cushions help liven up a room

VIRGINIA MACDONALD

Some of the best fun in decorating is creating a great cushion scheme to add personality, luxurious comfort and oh-so-much style to a room. Here are a few tips to help get you started:

- On a sofa, 18-to-20 in. sq. cushions work well. Try mixing graphic floral or figural prints with a co-ordinating stripe, and layering in some textured solids like a small-scale woven or a textured silk.
- Overblown florals and a crisp white background keep things fresh, not fussy.
- Balance embellished cushions with simpler ones, like knife-edge and self-piped styles.
- Piping is a slim cord, usually 1/4 in. in diameter, that outlines a sewn edge; either self-piping (in the same material) or contrast piping (another material).
- Knife edge is a simple seamed or sewn edge that provides a clean look, allowing the fabric pattern to wrap continuously.

— WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY CHRISTINE HANLON

Paint: Churlish Green 251, Farrow & Ball; farrow-ball.com. Sewing: The Sewing Studio by Gail Leger, 416-461-6683. Cushion fabric: (on sofa, from right) Verdi, Gatas Magnolia Raya stripe in 12, Gatas Magnolia floral in 12; (on floor, from top) Raspberry silk, Vincento Olive, Trelliange; trim; Designer Fabrics, designerfabrics.ca. Fjadrar cushion inserts, Ribba frames: Ikea; ikea.ca. Jacqui coffee table: Constantine, constantineinteriors.com. For more details, see Where to find it, page 140, in the April issue of Style at Home.

Shades of spring **This season, it's about combining colours, textures and finishes**

White & wood

Thanks to warm woods and natural textures, this look exemplifies casual beachside living yet is as chic and stylish as it gets for everyday spaces.

Small shells and time-worn photos turn clear glass candleholders into a charming vignette. **Galej candleholders: Ikea; ikea.ca.**

Burled wood frames complement elegant bird prints. **Prints: Ethan Allen, ethanallen.com.**

This refined cane chair really sings against a white background. **Charleston cane chair: Stacaro Home Interiors, stacaro.com.**

A bowl of driftwood or a bundle of branches is a refreshing alternative to freshly cut blooms. **Pussy willows, Absolutely, absolutelyinc.com.**

TRACY SHUMATE

Weathered wood walking sticks are pleasingly tactile. **Umbrella stand, walking sticks, Absolutely. absolutelyinc.com.**

— WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY CHRISTINE HANLON

Envisioning a playful palette for a young girl's bedroom

Q I have a daughter who loves lime green. She has a beanbag chair and bedding that are lime green, so I'm wondering what colour I should paint the walls.

— Tracy Bailey, via email

A If the bedding is a print with lime green in it, why not paint the walls lime green? Here's a room I decorated a few years ago. It's fun and bright and was done for a girl whose favourite colour was also lime green.

This is Sico's Daring Green 4005-54. If you decide to go for lime, temper its brightness with lots of pure white furniture. Paint the bedside table, chest of drawers and desk white. If the bedding is solid lime, then green might be too intense.

In that case, choose a pretty aqua for the walls instead. Around the Style at Home office these days, our favourite aqua is Benjamin Moore's Bird's Egg 2051-60. I used it in my niece Morgan's room (page 84 of the April issue of Style at Home). It's a shade that will look great with all the lime green in your daughter's bedroom. For fun, add a few accents in coral, yellow and lavender if you like.

— Margot Austin, senior design editor, Style at Home

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The Rouge	13502	2,200	~~$328,990~~	$309,990	$19,000
SEMIS	LOT#	SQ. FT.	PREV. PRICE	PRICE NOW	SAVINGS
The Malvern	22L	2,556	~~$421,690~~	$397,990	$23,700
The Malvern	22R	2,556	~~$421,690~~	$397,990	$23,700
The Malvern	24R	2,556	~~$421,690~~	$397,990	$23,700
The Malvern	26L	2,556	~~$421,690~~	$397,990	$23,700
The Malvern	27L	2,556	~~$421,690~~	$390,990	$30,700
The Regent	4L	2,577	~~$422,790~~	$399,990	$22,800
The Regent	6L	2,577	~~$422,790~~	$399,990	$22,800

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Brad nailer for your home reno
Stanley-Bostitch introduced today its new brad nailer kit — the model BT1855K — for applications including shoe and cove molding, chair rail, cabinetry, furniture, and woodworking and it weighs only 2.7 pounds. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Do you know your walls?

HomeScape

Have you ever had to uncover the precise location of a plumbing or electrical problem?

It's no fun, let me tell you. If it's a renovation or a new build, memory is not a terribly reliable method to locate the exact location of pipes or wires. To find the plumbing, electrical or other "in-the-wall" problem, you or someone you hire would have to perform "investigative work."

Unfortunately, what this often means is holes in your wall, and possibly, the partial or complete demolition of painstakingly applied finishes like paint, tiling, mouldings or built-in cabinetry. Not to mention the frustration associated with this kind of search.

You may be asking, well, what about referring to the architectural drawings? And this is a very good plan if the drawings include specific and updated plans of all your behind-the-walls items, such as plumbing, electrical work and heating, for instance.

However, reality is often less than ideal. If you have an older home, your plans may date from 1921, if you even have them anymore. If you have a home that is new or renovated, you may know by now that the real world of home construction can be far less organized than you may have expected, despite everyone's good intentions.

Sometimes architectural plans are not specific enough with the wiring or plumbing. And homeowners do change their minds, goodness knows, and perhaps more than once. And finally, everything may not have been executed exactly as is indicated on the plan. There may have been some very good reasons to diverge from the plan — but everybody seems to have forgotten what they were or even what decision was eventually made. The bottom line is that you may have to break open your walls.

The bottom line is that you may have to break open your walls.

While I was at the Toronto National Home Show recently, I spied something that made me wish I had been aware of this service a little earlier. Too late for me, but for new renovators, what a fantastic way to document construction so that you view photos to search for the source of any problem rather than viewing broken drywall and ruined finishes.

Vancouver-based Multivista Construction Documentation (multivista.com) provides a service that systematically documents the construction process, including all the work in the walls, from the beginning until the end. The photos, which are taken with inspection-grade digital photography that can be used for those invaluable zoom-in shots, are taken from key perspectives both externally and internally. They are indexed by time and location. With a password, the photos are available online during the construction process, and after the construction is complete, you will own a permanent record of your entire project plus a cute slideshow to boot.

Yes, it means extra bucks. Sean Fitzgibbons, one of the owners of the Ontario operation based in Toronto says the cost starts from about $1,500 for a 3,000 square foot house and a construction job with a length of six to eight months. But the initial cost could easily pay for itself when problems pop up, he says — and I can vouch for that. Reputable residential contractors have ample reason to include the cost of the service in their estimate, says Fitzgibbons. Or homeowners can ask for the service to be included as part of their reno project, a very smart move if you ask me.

SYLVIA PUTZ PHOTOS

These photos show the Multivista Construction Documentation progression at the National Home Show in Toronto.

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show Arresting Design; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

Great savings with all new dining at Idomo.

New shipments have arrived at Idomo. All glass tops are tempered and are available with a glass lazy susan or hidden extension making them ideal for condo living. The unique teardrop table will re-invent your condo space allowing easy access around it while the space saving square table has an easy glide extension for extra guests.

Let Idomo's designs give back the space you need.

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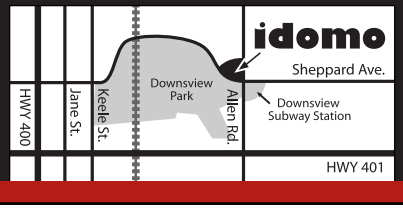
Tempered Glass Teardrop Table with White Chairs (Group. 390 030)
Includes: 90x90cm Table (390 009), 3 chairs (390 018).



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Perfect way to finish
For the do-it-yourselfer, Stanley-Bostitch has introduced a new finish stapler kit — the model SX1838K — for applications including finish/trim, corner bead, cabinetry, casing, flooring underlayment, staircases, and furniture. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Dramatic drive for DIY

VANESSA GRECO
for Metro Canada

Pop-art posters cover the kitchen cabinets. Walls are panelled with aluminum. Vinyl decals adorn the mirrors. And one man is responsible for all of it.

Welcome to designer Jonathan Fong's home — the canvas to his imagination.

Standing before crowds at the National Homes Show last weekend, the do-it-yourself designer challenged homeowners to take the reins when decorating their dwellings.

"Virtually anything can become a DIY project," said Fong, walking across stage in personalized pants patterned in original photos.

Seconds later, Fong reveals pictures of toilets artfully covered in comics and wrapping paper. It's this brand of fearless design that earned the crafty Californian frequent appearances on HGTV, Fine Living and a three-book deal.

But Fong describes his ascent to designer stardom as accidental. Just eight years ago he'd been a copywriter with little interest in decor, working at a Los Angeles advertising agency.

Only after moving into a brand-new, white-walled condominium, Fong began to experiment with DIY design.

"I was trying to flex my creativity outside of work but didn't know where to start," he said, adding that blank walls were the most intimidating part about decorating.

Drawing inspiration from a friend's wedding magazines, Fong made fabric wall panels for his bedroom. Fixed to the wall with Velcro, the fabric boards came in a variety of white textiles such as silk and faux-fur.

"I did it without a professional, with my limited skill-set of gluing and cutting," he said. "After I figured out the mechanics of doing it, I was emboldened me to try other things."

The reason many people take a hands-off approach when decorating their homes is because they're afraid to make mistakes, said Fong, adding error is an important part of the creative process. Safety, however, shouldn't be sacrificed for creativity.

"At the end of the day, I want you to be excited about your home," he said. "Be dramatic. Take chances."

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Jonathan Fong, who often appears on HGTV, Fine Living, was at the National Homes Show last week showing people the fine art of Do It Yourself.

A command centre can help houses run smooth

ORGANIZATION Running a family can seem a lot like managing a business. There are budgets to be balanced, events to be planned, supplies to be warehoused.

Human resource issues crop up daily: What's on everyone's calendar? How can schedules be co-ordinated so that everyone will be in the right place at the right time? Productivity is a priority. Homework is due, longer-range school projects need attention, and mom and dad will likely put in a few hours' work once the kids are in bed.

To keep things running smoothly, many families are creating a central workspace that goes beyond the kitchen table or a parent's home office. It doesn't have to take up much room, says interior designer Brian Patrick Flynn, but it does need to be planned carefully to maximize efficiency and style.

This one location — perhaps a corner of your kitchen or great room — serves many purposes.

Information Hub

Hang up a dry-erase board or chalkboard and a corkboard to keep schedules, invitations, flyers, shopping lists, messages between family members and pending mail in one place, says interior designer Janine Carendi.

Using the walls not only saves space, but it helps you stay organized. "If you can see the items pinned on the wall, you'll remember them," she says. "Even if things are beautifully filed, you're going to forget them if you can't see them."

Homework Central

Child psychologists and Internet safety experts say it's best for kids to use a computer in a common area of the home so that their parents have a good sense of what they're seeing and who they're talking with.

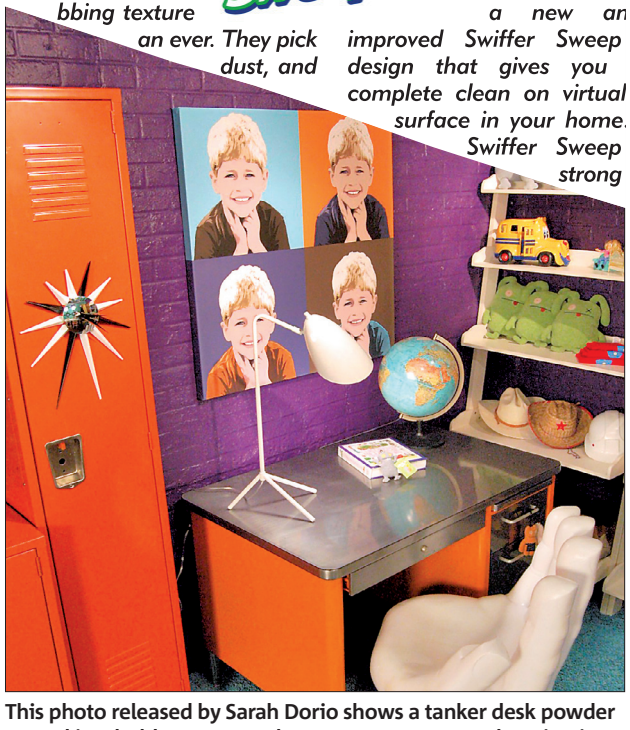
Flynn suggests using a laptop rather than a desktop the same desk that's used for homework can be used for art projects when the laptop is stowed away.

Equipment Area

The family workspace is a great storage spot and charging station for laptops, cellphones, digital cameras and handheld video game consoles. Hang shelves near an electrical outlet (you may need to have an outlet installed for this purpose) and line it with small bins or boxes to hold small electronics. Carendi suggests buying little wooden boxes, then drilling holes in the back so wires can be fed through. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It may be old, but it's useful

- Designer Brian Patrick Flynn recommends using a vintage metal tanker desk for your station, available online at sites like twentygauge.com or at flea markets. These desks are sturdy, stylish and can be painted any colour.



This photo released by Sarah Dorio shows a tanker desk powder coated in a bold orange used to create a corner workstation in a family activity room in a room designed by Brian Patrick Flynn.

It's (almost) a done deal

LegalMatters

Jeffrey D. Cowan

jeff@cowanandtaylor.com

Q I have been contacted by my lawyer stating that the final closing on my condo is scheduled next month. What are my next steps?

A You have been occupying your unit most likely for a number of months on an interim basis. This is contractually stipulated occupancy so that you are virtually carrying the cost of the unit once it is livable. The first thing you should do is make sure your lawyer knows about this date. There is then a sequence of events that must occur:

- Contact your financial institution and let them know when the final closing date is and be aggressive with the financial planner/advisor that you want to come in at their earliest possible convenience and finalize all paperwork. Once you have completed the paperwork with your local representative, they then have to send the documentation off to the central mortgage unit, underwriting and processing, which can take several business days.
- Once you are assured your banker has sent off the documents to his funding department, follow up with him to make sure there are no missing documents: Such as proof of income.
- Follow up with your lawyer to make sure they have received mortgage instructions at least four or five business days before the scheduled closing date. Banks often impose three to five business day deadlines for the law firm to request the funds for the mortgage.
- Be prepared to be flexible around the time of closing so you can leave work to sign documents and do banking. Once your lawyer has mortgage instructions he or she can tell you everything you need to know in order to complete the transaction.

Rest assured that your lawyer is aware of a ticking clock from the time they are made aware of the final closing date. The more advance planning, the less stressful everything will be.

Jeffrey D. Cowan is the principal of Cowan & Taylor, Barristers & Solicitors, jeff@cowanandtaylor.com. The information contained in this article should not be relied upon as legal advice.

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Is now the best time to buy?

TheHunt

Amit Paul

amitp@rogers.com

If you've considered buying at any point in 2009 chances are you've also asked yourself if now is the right time to buy. Here's a little insight on the topic.

Just about everyone has seen and acknowledged the widespread drop in real estate prices across the GTA. The point of debate, as we move towards spring, seems to be whether now is the best time to purchase, or if waiting until later in the year will ultimately save you a few thousand dollars extra. There are supporters of both sides of the coin; those that say we've seen the worst, and those who believe that the worst is yet to come. In my own opinion I think it's most important to not lose sight of the real question, which isn't so much will prices continue to drop, but rather how much more could they drop, even if they do?

While I don't have the benefit of a crystal ball I do believe that Toronto's real estate prices have tailed off about as much as they logistically can. While many economists will lead you to believe that our overall market will continue to spiral down, it's relevant to note that the climate of our real estate market does not rise and fall at the same pace of the overall economy. To illustrate the point — consider that while all hockey players see their athletic prowess deteriorate with age, the best don't rise and fall with the same dramatic nature of the rest of the pack. Wayne Gretzky and Mario Lemieux, while slowed down somewhat by age, played at a very high level, above most, all the way into retirement. Real estate is like the hall-of-famer, MVP on Team Economy.

So while I don't pretend to be as well experienced in the economy overall, I do believe with good reason that real estate prices will begin to stabilize this summer, across at least the better areas of the GTA.

One serious fallacy the so called experts often make when assessing the immediate future of the real estate market in the GTA is likening it to our stock market. The two are completely different animals. Without getting into theories and details, understand that some of the most popular blue chip stocks, bank stocks, have dropped as much as 50 per cent or more. If stocks and real estate were really similar then even the strongest real estate in the GTA — not the weakest — would be worth at best half of what it was last year. I can assure you that not only has the best survived, in many cases the descent has been only a few thousand dollars. Bayview Village in North York comes to mind as one such area that has demonstrated resounding strength even in the face of this market. At the same time, you'd be hard pressed to find any common place real estate that has been reduced to half its value.

Having said all of that, of course you want to evaluate what the mere possibility of falling prices throughout Summer 2009 could mean. Again, with the unfortunate lack of assistance from a crystal ball, I believe that at the very least the most dramatic impact on the GTA's real estate market has passed. So if you're looking for an above-average home, are buying as well as selling, or considering one of the more popular areas of the GTA, logically, waiting in the hopes of saving a few thousand extra, doesn't appear to be a decision that will prove worthwhile. Of course your specific situation will ultimately determine your best course of action, but if you're looking for a general rule of thumb here, this is it.

If there is an ultimate rule of thumb it's that the best time to buy is when you're ready — financially and emotionally. At the end of the day you're making arguably the largest purchase you'll ever make, and choosing the place you will call home. Allow me to humbly suggest that in this particular case, money not be your only or ultimate goal.

If you have any questions on this article, or real estate in general, feel free to contact me.

Happy Hunting!

Amit is a Realtor/Developer with Re/Max. amitp@rogers.com

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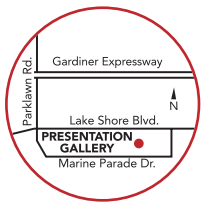

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To learn more about real estate, pick-up New dreamhomes & condominiums Magazine

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Elegant Minto townhomes coming soon to Vaughan

Luxury, elegance and convenience look forward to welcoming you home!

Located minutes from three major highways, the Roxborough community captures exquisite luxury living combined with convenience. This new neighbourhood provides residents with the most ideal setting, allowing fast access to a variety of shopping venues and plazas, schools, parks, as well as a number of community and cultural centres.

The Roxborough community is in the city of Vaughan, and is located north west of the intersection at 16th Avenue and Bathurst Street. Currently, Minto is selling singles on 40- and 50-foot lots, ranging in size from 2,700 to 4,400 square feet. Prices for these beautifully crafted executive homes start at $584,900.

Later this month, Minto is excited to release executive freehold townhomes for sale at the Roxborough site in Vaughan. These townhomes will be Energy Star qualified, which comes as a standard feature. The release is set to come with many preview bonus incentives. Minto will hold a preview release sale, only open to those who have registered in advance. Don't miss out on this opportunity! Register now at minto.com/roxborough to receive updates as they happen and stay tuned for more details.

Minto Communities has put an exceptional amount of time and effort into designing these architecturally articulate models, and is extremely honoured to offer this collection of homes for sale. You too will feel proud and delighted to welcome friends and family into your new Minto home in the Roxoborough community. These homes are not only practical and functional, lending themselves to accommodate a variety of lifestyles, but they also exude elegance.

Phase 1 of the project has only eight lots left for sale. All of these remaining lots come with exceptional decor upgrades, adding extraordinary value to your investment. Some of these homes feature hardwood floors, oak stairs, whirlpool tub in the master ensuite, and more. This will also be your last chance to purchase one of the 50-foot lots.

Stop by the sales centre in Vaughan with your family and tour two of Minto's model showhomes. Come out and explore today — see the excellent detail in these homes for yourself.

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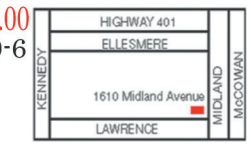

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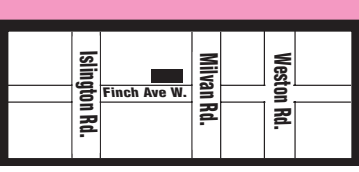

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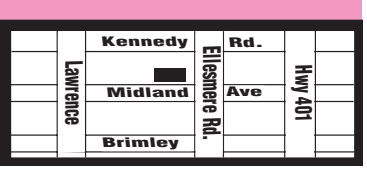


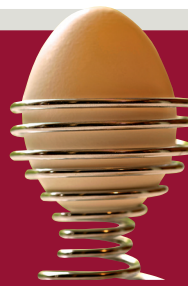
**Pictures may not be exactly as shown.

Where the women are

A recent study of 508 farmers' markets across Canada revealed that women shoppers outnumber men almost three to one. About 30 per cent of shoppers are aged 18 to 39. More than half of shoppers routinely visit the market unaccompanied. FARMERSMARKETSONTARIO.COM

Food

Eggs are a reasonably priced protein source. Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating recommends two eggs as a serving from the Meat and Alternatives Food Group. BARB HOLLAND/FOR METRO CANADA



What's inside

One of nature's most nutritious foods, one large egg contains 75 calories, 5 g fat (of which only 1.5 g are saturated) and many essential vitamins and minerals.

BARB HOLLAND/FOR METRO CANADA

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

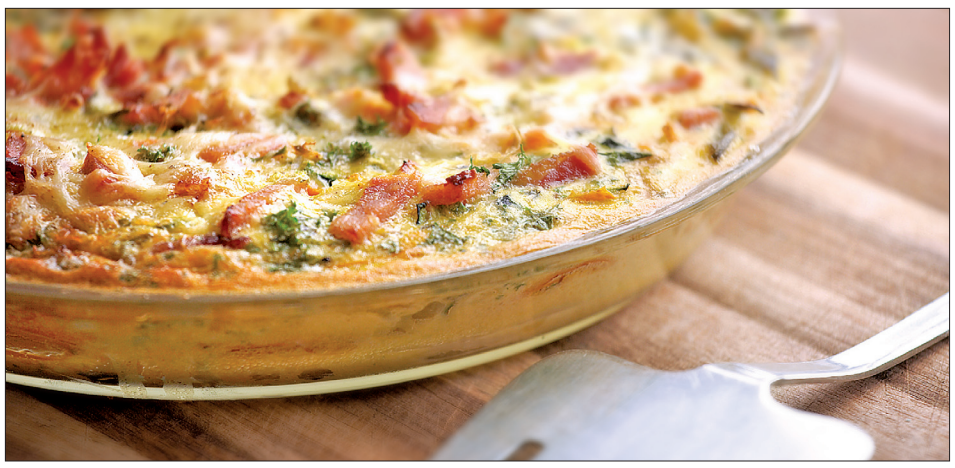
Think outside the shell

À la carte

Barb Holland

metronews.ca/alacarte

Ever-so-versatile eggs patiently sit in your refrigerator waiting for their chance to shine. Combined with a few other ingredients, eggs make a satisfying midweek supper in short order. A frittata is an open-faced omelette, a traditional way to use up cooked (or fresh) vegetables, cheese, meat or other filling ingredients with, of course, eggs. Cooked in a skillet over direct heat until browned on the underside, it can be finished under the broiler to set.



Cooked chicken or turkey can be tossed into your frittata in place of the ham as well as any variety of vegetable — almost anything goes.

Potato and Ham Frittata

This easy-to-make dish is a speedy supper, especially if you happen to have some leftover cooked potatoes on hand. Cooked chicken or turkey can be tossed in (or not) in place of the ham — almost anything goes. Serve with a green salad and crusty whole grain bread. Makes 4 servings.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tbsp (15 ml) vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 cup (250 ml) sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup (250 ml) cooked, diced potatoes (about 1 medium)
- 8 eggs
- pinch salt, dried thyme leaves and pepper
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) diced cooked ham, chicken or turkey, optional
- 1 cup (250 ml) shredded old Cheddar cheese, divided

METHOD:

In large nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and mushrooms and cook until lightly softened, 2 to 3 minutes. Add potatoes; cook 1 to 2 minutes.

In a bowl, beat eggs with salt, thyme and pepper; stir in ham, if using, and half the cheese. Add to skillet; reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring gently for about 30 seconds, lifting edges with heatproof spatula to allow uncooked egg to flow underneath. Cook without stirring until bottom is golden and top is almost set, about 5 minutes.

Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Cover skillet to let cheese melt. Alternately, if skillet handle is heatproof, place skillet under broiler until frittata is set and cheese melts. (If skillet handle is not ovenproof, wrap in foil.) Cut into wedges to serve.

Tip: If you don't have cooked potatoes, scrub a medium sized potato, pierce well and microwave at high until almost cooked, 2 to 3 minutes. Cool slightly, then dice (leave skin on for added fibre).

Barb Holland is a professional home economist and food writer who believes in shopping locally and in season.

Apple Turnover Breakfast Sundae

Tighten the belt in more ways than one

In The Biggest Loser Family Cookbook: Budget-Friendly Meals Your Whole Family Will Love, best-selling author Devin Alexander shows families that eating on a budget can be easy, nutritious, and delicious with more than 125 recipes. Metro nabbed this breakfast treat from the book:

Apple Turnover Breakfast Sundae

The contestants are always seeking on-the-go options for breakfast. This is a great one if you pack it in a small resealable plastic container to throw in your cooler bag along with a spoon — it's an easy treat to enjoy after your morning workout or to send to school with the kids.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup (175 ml) fat-free, sugar-free apple turnover–flavoured or other apple-flavoured yogurt
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) crunchy, high-fiber, low-sugar cereal (such as Grape-Nuts)
- 1/3 cup chopped apple (about 1/2 small apple)
- Pinch of ground cinnamon
- 1-1/2 teaspoons raisins (optional)

METHOD:

Spoon the yogurt into a small, deep bowl. Sprinkle the cereal over the yogurt, followed by the apple. Top with the cinnamon and then the raisins, if using, and serve.

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LiquidAssets

Peter Rockwell

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Old friends

Whoever coined the phrase "the past is the past" never envisioned Facebook. While hearing from old high school chums and former flames may not appeal to everybody, my Facebook experience has been a hoot — especially when friends post long forgotten images of us from back in the day.

I've been particularly interested in what we were drinking in some of those shots. Many of the wines we used to buy religiously 25 years ago are still around, so I thought I'd see how a couple of them have aged.

In the '80s **Hungary's Szekszárdi Vörös ($9.80 - $12.05)** was a tannic gut wrencher. Made with the local Kékfrankos grape the current 2007 vintage (still sold by the litre) is now light and juicy with a touch of spice that makes it a fine pizza/pasta red.

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Now if I could just live down my former A Flock of Seagulls hairdo.

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Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words; liquidassets@eastlink.ca.

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OPI launches new website

OPI recently launched its newly designed website (at opi.com), featuring the latest OPI products for nails, hands, feet, and skin. It also includes a Try-It-On Studio that allows you to see how OPI Nail Lacquer shades look on your skin tone. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Style

Making runway history...

Good news for those who admired the winning spring dress in Tuesday night's episode of Project Runway Canada: you can now purchase it. The bold shoulder, jersey knit, asymmetrical design by Jessica Biffi is now available at Winners stores for $99.99 in sizes four to 14. The original was green, but it is also available in lavender, coral and black as well. In Toronto, the dress can be purchased at the Lawerence & Bathurst, College Park, Bloor Street and Leaside locations. METRO NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Trend translations

What will the fall runways mean for the rest of us?

KENYA HUNT
Metro World News

While at some moments the endless stream of furs or sexed-up dresses seemed repetitive, Milan Fashion Week was an inspired mix of creatively upbeat clothing from futuristic silhouettes to old school glamorous dresses.

Some of history's most iconic fashion has come out of depressing times. And this season, Milan did not disappoint. Credit crunch or not, it's exciting to see fashion that makes you want to get dressed up again. Now if the economy would just bounce back so that we can all afford it. We recount the week's trends and explore how they will translate to life off the runway. (On a scale of 0, for magazines only, to 5, for wear it everyday).

The trend: Glamour girls

Rhinestones, luxe fabrics, bold prints and feminine hour-glass silhouettes are just a few of the elements that dominated this trend.

The designers: Sportmax, Byblos, Giorgio Armani, Versace, Alberta Ferretti, Moschino, Aquilano.Rimondi, Marni, Krizia

Runway to real life rating: 4. Break out the red lipstick and high heels and book an appointment at the hair salon. This is not a low-maintenance look.

PHOTOS BY MAURIZIO MAULE

The trend: Easy and wearable, yet chic

If there's one major complaint of the week, it's that too many collections neglected the everyday wardrobe needs that we all have. Sometimes a woman just wants a great, comfy sweater, an easy but chic pair of trousers, or a skirt that she doesn't have to suck her stomach in to wear.

The designers: Burberry Prorsum, DSquared2, Prada, Max Mara, Missoni

Runway to real life rating: 5. Prada's beautifully constructed suits, Burberry Prorsum's swinging skirts and Max Mara's wearable separates make great investments for the office (or the job interview.) Missoni's layered knits, meanwhile, are the ultimate daytime wear.

The trend: Sex goddess

Home to the house of Versace and Cavalli, Milan is the master of this concept. So its no surprise that the idea's comeback for fall would happen here. The biggest component of the sex goddess look: The thigh-high stiletto.

The designers: Roberto Cavalli, Blumarine, Versace, Gucci.

Runway to real life rating: 3. Expect to get extra hoots and whistles on the street.

Accessories alert: Boots made for walking

• From Prada's outdoorsy versions (far right), to Burberry's cooler than cool high heel motorcycle boots to Cavalli's soft thigh-high stilettos (right), boots win the prize for the biggest accessory trend for fall.

- KENYA HUNT

Project Runway's innovative twist
Talk about a sticky situation... next Tuesday (March 10) on Project Runway Canada, the remaining six designers will be challenged to create an artistic evening gown using many variations of the Post-it Note. Watch it at 10 p.m. on Global. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Unexpected style

Photographer captures everyday looks at Paris Fashion Week

KENYA HUNT
Metro World News

A sign of the times: the "guardian of all style" is a blogger.

I'm referring to the fashion photographer/illustrator/up-and-coming stylist Garance Doré, who The New York Times christened a sartorial gatekeeper of note in a recent article. She isn't a socialite who grew up calling major designers "auntie" or "godfather", didn't attend a prominent fashion design school and hasn't worked as an editor at a major magazine of note — all of which are seeming requisites for the fashion world's most noted tastemakers. Instead, Doré grew up in Corsica where her mother owned a popular restaurant, studied communications and got her foot in the proverbial fashion door through a series of freelance illustrator jobs.

"I never even thought I could dare work in fashion," Doré admits. She attracts thousands upon thousands of visitors to her two-year-old site daily, including powerful editors. They check for her intimate portraits of painfully chic, non-famous men and women on the street, usually in Paris where she lives. Her story represents a general power shift of sorts in the fashion world.

As the public becomes increasingly bored with manufactured celebrity magazine covers and mainstream first-name-basis designers they search for inspiration online instead through pictures of real people wearing difficult-to-identify clothing. "I think people connect with me because my site has a certain honesty. I'm not plugging products," she says. She's on the third leg of a fashion week tour that will end in Paris next week.

While most street style bloggers canvas an area, snapping shots of every interesting looking person they encounter. Doré's work is more deliberate and painstaking. "I began my blog by just posting my illustrations, which can take hours or days to do. So my photographs have more thought and process behind them," she says before recounting a story in which a well-known international magazine asked her to contribute street style photography. "They wanted me to take 'x' amount of photos and I had to turn them down because I don't work by numbers," she says. While she currently makes no money from her site, it's led her to other potentially lucrative projects. She recently gave a panel discussion on street style photography in Italy and will begin styling a few photography projects to be shot by Scott Schuman, most commonly known for his photo blog, The Sartorialist.

"I really do adore magazines, but I don't need them to show my work and that feels great. I think this is the way of the future," she says.

Upcoming style coverage

Up-and-coming stylist/ photographer Garance Doré will be at Paris Fashion Week taking photographs of "everyday fashion" for her fashion blog (garancedore.fr/en).

Read Metro Style for upcoming coverage of:
- Paris Fashion Week — March 4 to 12.
- Toronto Fashion Week — March 16 to 21.

Kenya's Style
Kenya Hunt
Read the blog at metronews.ca/kenyasstyle

Up-and-coming stylist/ photographer/illustrator Garance Doré (above). Right: An example of Doré's whimsical fashion photography.

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Canadian Bachelorette

The Bachelor's third-place finisher — and a Canadian — Jillian Harris has been selected to star as the newest Bachelorette when the spin-off of the now controversy-mired reality show kicks off its fifth season this summer. **EONLINE.COM**

Entertainment

Puppy love

Oprah Winfrey has a new puppy. The talk show host and her longtime beau, Stedman Graham, adopted an eight-week-old cocker spaniel on Sunday. USMAGAZINE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

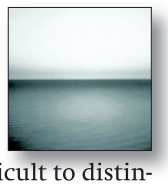
U2 lays it on the line

UNIVERSAL MUSIC

No Line On The Horizon is the new album from U2.

U2

Album: No Line On The Horizon
Label: Island/Universal
Rating: ●●●½



U2 HAS HAD such an impact on music over the past 25 years that it's now difficult to distinguish its sound from that claimed by the many bands who have followed in its footsteps. The soaring vocals, anthemic themes, patterned guitars, layered atmospherics and searching spirituality have become commonplace. But the Irish foursome prove on their latest studio effort that creativity still exists in middle age. They often find it by looking backward to their R&B, gospel and classic rock roots. You can hear it in the riffs of Stand Up Comedy and the fuzzed drive of Get On Your Boots. Those searching for a higher power will find it in Bono's over-the-top delivery of the obvious. ("God is love," Bono howls in Stand Up Comedy). His angst is everywhere here, rising like steam above the sonic stew cooked up by co-producers Daniel Lanois and Brian Eno. And it's not an easy angst to share. It's over-blown, for sure, but we've come to expect that.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

Music**Reviews**

music@metronews.ca

Neko **Case**

Album: Middle Cyclone
Label: Anti-/Epitaph
Rating: ●●●●

THE ONLY PROBLEM with Neko Case is that she doesn't release solo material fast enough. We can expect something new from her about every three years — that doesn't cut it for someone this good. Middle Cyclone is another stellar release from the alt.country artist, who also sings with The New Pornographers. It's loaded with infectious twang, crazy piano tracks (she recorded multiple piano parts on some tunes) and great guest spots from her Porno bandmates and members of Los Lobos and Calexico. With lyrics about animals, nature and tornadoes, this could be the first great summer album of the year.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

The **Prodigy**

Album: Invaders Must Die
Label: Take Me To The Hospital/Cooking Vinyl
Rating: ●●●●

SCIENCE FICTION techno rock from England that's sure to provoke riots on the dance floor. Music doesn't get more direct, or the message any clearer, than this. Liam Howlett pushes mosh pit music to the max. And, amazingly, none of the songs seem to be designed to hurt anyone or anything, except, maybe ... fictional space invaders, bad horror movie scripts, sophomoric notions of revolution, eight-track Iron Butterfly tapes, fish with sharp teeth and ear drums. The keyboard run on Colours sparks fond memories of the Stranglers' Rats Rally. There's even a tip of the hat to Manfred Mann on Stand Up. Fire up the strobes, blow out your sub-woofers and have a good time.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

On the web

There's more online at metronews.ca/music:

- reviews of Shout Out Out Out Out and Chris Isaak
- Links to this week's reviewed music

Comic-crazy Fox
Megan Fox has signed on to star in not one, but two comic book movies — Jonah Hex and Fathom. The 22 year-old Transformers star is reportedly a huge comic book fan. **EMPIREONLINE.COM**

You've come a long way, Barbie

The world-renowned Mattel doll turns the big 5-0 next week

JENNIFER YANG
for Metro Canada

In half a century, she's been an astronaut, an Olympian, and a four-time presidential candidate — all while maintaining a perky bod with nary a wrinkle in sight.

Only one woman on earth (albeit not a real one!) is capable of such improbable achievements, and her name is Barbie Millicent Roberts — or, simply, Barbie, as we all know her.

"Barbie's come a long way," said Adriana Gut, Barbie brand manager for Mattel Canada. "What's interesting about her is she's managed to stay really relevant and is truly a reflection of the times."

This Monday, Barbie turns 50 years old, five decades after debuting at the New York Toy Fair in a zebra-print swimsuit. Little girls quickly swooned over the buxom blond and toy maker Mattel sold 300,000 that year, making Barbie both a household name and a household item.

Today, three Barbies are sold every second, according to Mattel. Barbie has also undergone many transformations, with 108 careers on her resume and 50 nationalities on her passport. Her closet has millions of outfits, some designed by the likes of Vera Wang or Christian Lacroix, and her shoe collection is steadily approaching infinity.

And while Barbie has as many critics as she does fans, there's no debating her iconic status. To celebrate her birthday, Mattel Canada collaborated with five Canadian brands to design exclusive product lines, with everything from couches to couture for the modern-day Barbie buff.

Barbie stilettos are also finally available in human size now, thanks to Town Shoes. "Every little girl wanted to fit in to Barbie shoes," said Crissi Giamos, director of public relations.

Barbie clothes, too, will now be human-sized when David Dixon unveils his Barbie-inspired collection at Toronto Fashion Week. "I went 'Barbie clothes for women?' ... and said, 'Yeah, why not?'" Dixon said. "It's allowed me to explore a new avenue with my signature collection."

Cake founder Heather Reier says her line of Barbie cosmetics "celebrates how far she's come ... It has all that old-school quality feel to it but with a different spin."

And what Barbie fantasy is complete without a home? The Bay will soon be selling Barbie furniture and home accessories by Glenn Dixon, co-host of W Network's Take This House and Sell It!

"Everyone has a Barbie story," Dixon said. "It's about living out your dreams, more than the doll itself."

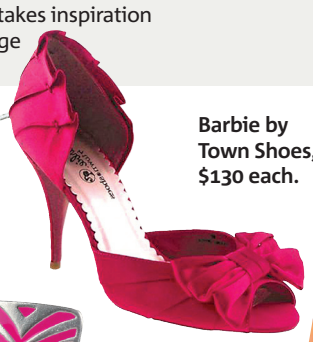
The Kimora Lee Simmons Barbie models Baby Phat.

Celebrate Barbie's 50th with these products

Join the celebration with offerings from these Canadian designers:

- Designer David Dixon has created a women's collection to honour the world's tiniest fashionista. It promises to add plenty of pink to the runway at its Toronto Fashion Week debut (March 16).
- Foxy Originals' Barbie jewelry collection uses playful zebra and rainbow prints, riffing on designers Jen Kluger and Suzie Orol's '80s childhoods for inspiration. "We had fun interpreting Barbie in terms of our generation," said Kluger.
- For that Barbie-perfect skin (minus all the plastic), Cake Beauty's creams, mists and scrubs — in a specially-concocted signature Barbie scent that takes inspiration from vintage '60s Barbies — will be available at Sephora.
- Town Shoes has designed a party shoe, platform sandal and zebra-print pump, all sporting a Barbie-pink sole.
- Glenn Dixon's home furnishings and accessories, such as lacquered chairs and modern sofas, will make for a glam addition to any Dream House. Available at the Bay.

JENNIFER YANG /FOR METRO CANADA



Barbie by Town Shoes, $130 each.

Barbie Zebra Ring, $24, (right) and reversible Barbie pendant, $34, (above), both by Foxy. Find a store near you or order online at foxyoriginals.com.

Barbie by Cake collection: Gotta Hand it to Her velveteen hand creme, $20, left, and Starlit boudoir candle, $20, below. Available at Sephora starting March 14.

Shop 'til you drop, just like this Donna Karan Barbie. At left, Barbie outfitted in a corset dress by Versace.

Boyle could direct musical

Entertainment Weekly reports Slumdog Millionaire's Danny Boyle will not direct the newest Bond movie, but the Academy Award winner is talking to Sony Pictures about helming the studio's remake of the musical My Fair Lady. EW.COM

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Britney Spears' Circus finally hits the road

Dressed as a sexy ringmaster and directing a colorful cast that included jugglers, acrobats and martial arts dancers, Britney Spears delivered a tightly choreographed, if perfunctory performance Tuesday night as she kicked off her first concert tour in five years.

The 27-year-old pop superstar's Circus tour kicked off in her home state of Louisiana at the New Orleans Arena before a nearly sold-out crowd that cheered on their idol as she gyrated and slithered across the stage while singing some of her biggest hits, from the recent Womanizer to her first and now classic song, Baby One More Time.

The wild applause has been largely absent from Spears' life since the last time she went on tour in 2004, as the singer endured a devastating downward spiral: Due largely to personal troubles, she went from one of pop music's most profitable, in-demand entertainers to an out-of-control tabloid persona who seemed to be on a path to destruction. But over the last year, that path has been reversed, as she's embarked on a successful comeback that has seen her image, as well as her career, rehabilitated.

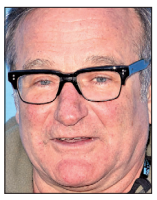
GETTY IMAGES

The Circus tour was another strong step in the right direction. Spears didn't interact much with the crowd — the only thing she uttered to the audience was "Thank you, New Orleans" at the end of the nearly two-hour show — and appeared at times to be lip-synching. But fans didn't seem to care, screaming wildly at the first sight of Spears, who descended from the ceiling on hoops suspended by wires, wearing a short red and black ringmaster ensemble.

Spears in Toronto

- Spears will be in town for a pair of gigs at the Air Canada Centre on March 18 & 19.

Williams cancels comedy shows



Williams

PEOPLE Robin Williams is cancelling several performances in Florida of his one-man comedy show, Weapons of Self-Destruction, after recently experiencing shortness of breath.

The comedian says in a news release doctors are evaluating him and recommended a week of rest.

Williams had been scheduled to perform this week in Hollywood, Fla.

Latifah fan wins songwriting prize

MUSIC Queen Latifah, who gave fans the chance to write and pick one of the songs for her next album, has a winner.

Ingrid Woode, of Sharonville, Ohio, will join Latifah in the studio to record Woode's original song Fairweather Friend for the upcoming Persona' album.

The 25-year-old Woode works a day job at a pharmaceutical company.

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TO		Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
3/5/09		265	353	2	TVO	Beijing Olympic Stadium		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Blackpool		Masterworks: The Rape		Agenda-Paikin
		211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	Survivor: Tocantins (N)		The Office (N)	Kink in Hair	Life "Jackpot" (HDTV)		News (N)
		215	343	4	OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News (N)		Vivere Il	News (N)	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
		210	302	6	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Doc Zone "Shock Wave" (N)				CBC News: The National		The Hour
		214	344	7	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Ugly Betty (N)		30 Rock	30 Rock	Hell's Kitchen (PA) (N)		News (N)
		212	313	8	CTV	etalk	Hollywood	American Idol		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		ER "What We Do" (N)		News (N)
		218	345	11	E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	Name Is Earl	Kath & Kim (N)	*Premonition* (2004, Suspense) Casper Van Dien, John Tench.				News (N)
		137	763	13	TFO	Panorama		Météo	Nouv. mondes	*Le Testament du Dr Mabuse* ★★★ (1933, Suspense)				Volt
		-	-	14	-	Raymond	Raymond	News (N)		News (N)		2Half Men	King	Cold Case
		213	326	15	SUN	Scrubs	George Lopez	Smallville "Legion"		Supernatural (HDTV)		Canadian Music Week 2008		Becker
		-	387	16	CBS	Inside Edition	Hollywood	Survivor: Tocantins (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		(10:01) Eleventh Hour		News (N)
		-	385	17	NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Name Is Earl	Kath & Kim (N)	The Office (N)	30 Rock	ER "What We Do" (N)		News (N)
		-	386	18	ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Ugly Betty (N)		Grey's Anatomy		(10:02) Private Practice		News
		219	346	20	ACH-B	Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Wife Swap (N)		Private Practice		(10:01) Eleventh Hour		News (N)
		-	-	28	FOX	Judge Judy (N)	Two/Half Men	American Idol		Hell's Kitchen (PA) (N)		Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
		-	388	61	PBS	News-Lehrer	Goodnight Swt.	Moveable Feast Chefs			Great Performances			Business Rpt.
		297	652	330	WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Smallville "Legion"		Supernatural (HDTV)		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men
		296	654	331	SBK	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Dr. Phil (HDTV) (N)		WBZ News (N)	'70s Show	Frasier	Frasier	Punk'd
		298	653	332	TLA	Jamie Foxx	Wayans Bros.	My Wife-Kids	According-Jim	Friends	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Smallville
	news	502	390	26	NW	CBC News	Newman	The Hour		CBC News: The National		Geologic Journey		National
		500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias		Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
		509	504	79	CNB	Kudlow Report		CNBC Reports (HDTV)		Billionaire Next Door, Access		On the Money		Mad Money
	sports	405	417	22	net	NHL Hockey Toronto Maple Leafs at Washington Capitals. (HDTV) (Live)					Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
		400	400	30	TSN	That's Hockey!	Interruption	World Extreme Cagefighting (HDTV)				SportsCentre (HDTV) (Live)		
		411	457	58	OLN	Dog the Bounty Hunter		Survivorman		Mantracker		Dog the Bounty Hunter		Survivorman
		417	406	81	SC	Pimp My Ride	Pass Time	Pinks -- All Out (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV)		Bullrun (HDTV) (N)		Pimp My Ride
	family	551	542	25	YTV	True Jackson	H2O, Just Add	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	In Real Life		Falcon Beach		Mystery Hnt.
		554	544	45	TEL	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	Batman Returns ★★ (1992, Action) Michael Keaton.			
		556	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	cable variety	602	567	27	W	Will & Grace	Friends	Divine Design	House	Confidential	Save Us-House	Divine Design	Love It-List It	House
		570	580	29	MM	Paris Hilton's My New BFF		America's Best Dance Crew		America's Best Dance Crew		disBand	disBand	Video on Trial
		615	520	31	A&E	The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV) (N)		The Beast "Mercy" (N)		The Beast
		700	800	35	TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	*Rocco* (2004, Drama) Niccolo Centioni, Federica Citarella.				Raymond	Raymond	George Lopez
		571	581	36	MMM	mmmtop	Back In	Enrique Iglesias-Belfast		RuPaul's Drag Race		RuPaul's Drag Race		Listed
		575	583	38	CMT	Our Song	Flashback	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Coyote Ugly
		616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		Love-Death	Love-Death	Trailer Park	Trailer Park	*Eurotrip* ★★ (2004, Comedy), Jacob Pitts		
		620	523	40	BVO	Camera	Snapshot	Bathroom Divas-Opera Star		Toscanini: In His Own Words (N)			Frontenac Trio	Law & Order
		601	562	41	SLC	Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	Bulging Brides	Bulging Brides	Last 10	Last 10	The Biggest Loser		ET Canada
		522	506	43	HIS	NCIS "Bete Noir"		Lost Worlds		Go Deep In Istanbul.		NCIS "Bete Noir"		Sea Hunters
		625	548	44	COM	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	VIP	Gong Show	Daily Show
		600	564	46	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Holmes on Homes		The Fix	Disaster DIY	Home to Flip	Real Renos	Holmes-Homes
		294	529	47	TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	*Monster-in-Law* (2005, Romance-Comedy)		
		576	582	49	BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live		Rip the Runway '09		Harlem Heights	Harlem Heights	The Game	The Game	Judge Hatchett
		627	528	50	SPC	Watchmen	The Circuit	Chuck (HDTV)		Star Trek: Voyager		Chuck (HDTV)		Stargate SG-1
		581	566	52	MTV	Sum 41-Heroes	After	MTV News	Cribs	Making the Band 4 (N)		The Girls of Hedsor Hall		MTV Live
		618	524	54	TROP	Make or Break	Naked Fashion	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy	Married... With	Seinfeld
		603	561	56	FOOD	Chef at Home	Chef at Home	Restaurant Makeover		Unwrapped	Secret Life of	Family	Glutton-Punish.	Ace of Cakes
		261	394	60	V	Murder, She Wrote		Wait for God	'Allo, 'Allo!	*The Muppets Take Manhattan* ★★★ (1984, Comedy)				Poltergeist
		621	527	63	STR	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		TMZ (N)	etalk	Off the Leash	Off the Leash	The Tonight Show-Jay Leno		TMZ
		553	546	65	TRE	Backyardigans	Nght Grdn	Max & Ruby	Franklin	Little Bear	Maggie-Beast	Comfy Couch	Zigby	Max & Ruby
		115	711	101	TVA	Histoires-filles	Star Académie:	La Classe de 5e (HDTV) (SC)		Taxi 0-22 (SC)	Caméra café	TVA 22 heures	(10:45) Denis Lévesque	
		126	730	102	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
		526	507	249	VIVA	Judging Amy		Commander In Chief		The West Wing		*Passion*	Homicide File	Psychic Inv.
		300	601	301	M1	(7:05) *The Visitor* ★★★ (2007, Drama), Hiam Abbass				*Chapter 27* ★★ (2007, Drama)			*The Killing of John Lennon*	
		305	612	306	PIX	*Frantic*	(7:20) *The Naked Spur* (1953, Western)			*Bad Boys* ★★★ (1995, Action) Martin Lawrence.				*Sleeping Dogs*

critics' corner

Chapter 27

A bloated mess. That describes both this 2007 drama and its antihero: Mark David Chapman, who assassinated John Lennon. What could have been a compelling study of a troubled mind is instead an hour and a half in the company of a creepy guy who'll have you wanting a shower afterward. Jared Leto reportedly gained 70 pounds to play Chapman, but he fails to truly become the character. You may find yourself wishing he'd pull the trigger already, just to get this ordeal over with. 9 PM on M1

Beijing Olympic Stadium

This stadium, built with 42,000 tons of steel to resemble a bird's nest, hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics. This documentary boasts fascinating footage of its construction, featuring interviews with the architects who designed with special disaster considerations as it sits on a major fault line. 7 PM on TVO

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Lilly hopes for Milli Vanilli's return

Evangeline Lilly is praying for a Milli Vanilli comeback — even though one of the duo is dead, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The actress was a huge fan of the 1980s pop act, who were disgraced in a lip-synching controversy. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Carrie on, Senator

COUPLE Things are getting serious between Carrie Underwood and her boyfriend, Ottawa Senators hockey player Mike Fisher: The singer is already spending quality time with his parents, people.com reports.

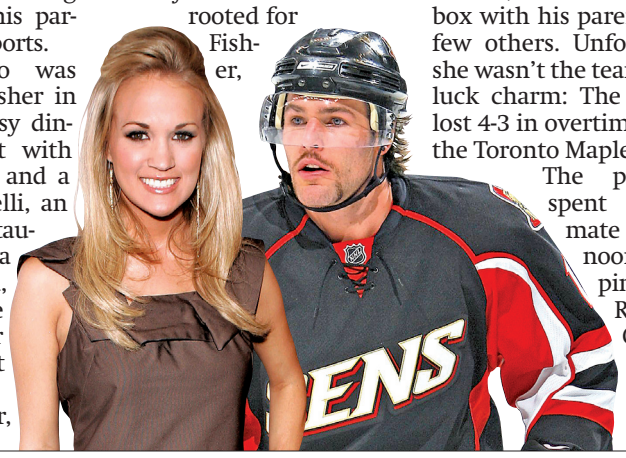
Underwood, who was first linked with Fisher in January, spent a cosy dinner Saturday night with Fisher, his parents, and a few friends at Fratelli, an upscale Italian restaurant in the Kanata section of Ottawa, shortly after the country singer cheered on Fisher at his hockey game.

During the dinner, the couple "seemed incredibly happy. They seem made for each other," says a source."

The dinner took place shortly after Underwood rooted for Fisher, the Senators' centre, from a private VIP box at the Scotiabank Centre. Underwood, who first publicly cheered on Fisher last month, shared the luxury box with his parents and a few others. Unfortunately she wasn't the team's good-luck charm: The Senators lost 4-3 in overtime against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

The pair also spent an intimate afternoon shopping at the Rideau Centre.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Miley reveals she was bullied

BOOK Miley Cyrus' school days were "friendless, lonely and miserable," femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The Hannah Montana star was bullied so badly when she was being educated in Tennessee she believed she would be physically harmed.

Writing in her new book Miley Cyrus: Miles To Go, she revealed: "The girls took it beyond normal bullying. These were big, tough girls. ... They were fully capable of doing me bodily harm."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Bachelor twist no fix: Creator

SHOW ABC's reality series The Bachelor has had its share of surprising endings, but Jason Mesnick's on-camera breakup with fiancée Melissa Rycroft and subsequent reunion with runner-up Molly Malaney has been by far the most shocking. But online rumours persist, with some wondering if the show's outcome was fixed, people.com reports.

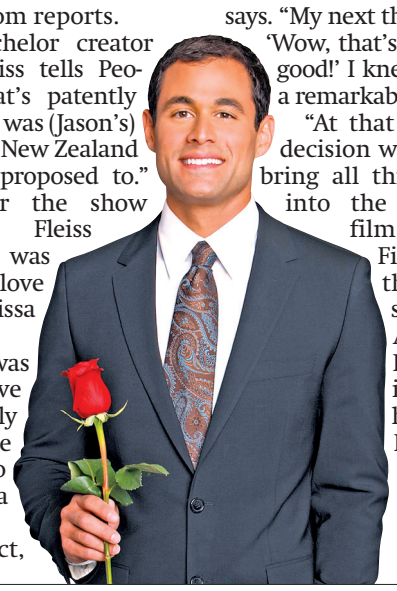
As Bachelor creator Mike Fleiss tells People, "That's patently untrue. It was (Jason's) choice in New Zealand who he proposed to." But after the show wrapped, Fleiss says, "He was not in love with Melissa anymore and he was in love with Molly and he needed to make a change."

In fact, no one saw this coming, says Fleiss, who upon returning to the States "was in the process of trying to talk Molly into being the Bachelorette."

A week later, Fleiss learned that Jason and Melissa were not getting along, and that he had never stopped thinking about Molly. "My first thought was, 'Oh, too bad,'" Fleiss says. "My next thought was, 'Wow, that's almost too good!' I knew that was a remarkable twist.

"At that point, the decision was made to bring all three parties into the studio to film After the Final Rose, the most shocking After the Final Rose in Bachelor history," Fleiss says.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



J-Lo 'pockets' jewels worth $50K

DIAMONDS Jennifer Lopez recently borrowed $50,000 worth of diamonds from Robert Mouawad to wear at an event last week— and she doesn't plan on giving them back. "We received a call from (her manager) Benny Medina, informing us that Jennifer was going to keep the jewelry," a source told Page Six.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Did Brown pop the question?

RELATIONSHIP According to Star magazine, while working things out in Miami at Sean Combs' Star Island retreat, Chris Brown broke down and proposed to Rihanna — less than a month after being arrested for allegedly assaulting her.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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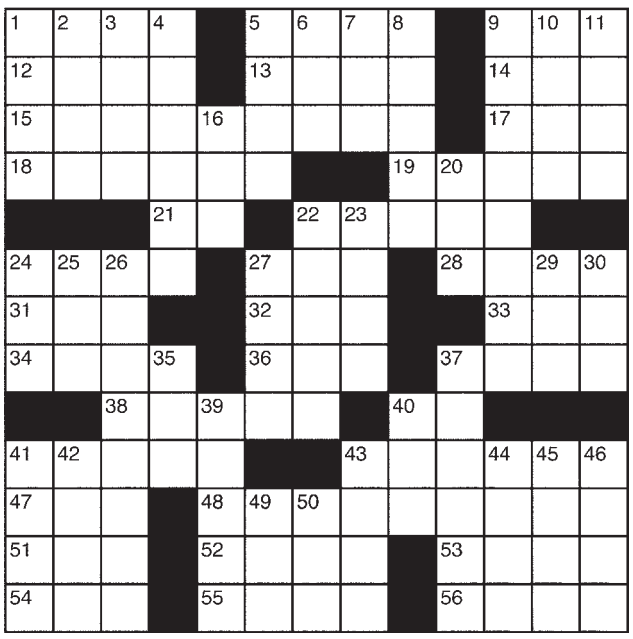

Crossword across

1 Typeface choice
5 Quest
9 Witty one
12 Open a crack
13 Terrible guy?
14 Rd.
15 Plumbers' job?
17 X rating?
18 Stages a protest, of a sort
19 On the qui vive
21 "And I should care ... why?"
22 "Napoleon Dynamite" star
24 Sore
27 Distant
28 As well
31 As well
32 Submachine gun
33 "— Town"
34 November responsibility
36 Fellows
37 Failure
38 Cardiff's country
40 "Goodness gracious!"
41 Extra
43 Tea variety
47 Table scrap
48 Johnson opponent
51 Anonymous John
52 Very enthusiastic
53 Telegram
54 Springtime mo.
55 Colleen
56 Garbage barge

Crossword down

1 Cry like a baby
2 California community
3 Tardy
4 Stylish
5 Billboard
6 Mendes or Longoria
7 Pack away
8 Massage
9 ABBA hit
10 State with certainty
11 Fellow
16 Carnival city
20 Grazing area
22 Mists
23 Ms. Brockovich
24 Off-roader (Abbr.)
25 Bill's partner
26 Trouble
27 Sulk angrily
29 Bottom line
30 Sceptre ornament
35 Listening device
37 Local ordinances
39 Constitutional
40 Take blades to blades
41 Pop
42 Item on stage
43 Probability
44 Related to 35-Down
45 Pianist Peter
46 Got bigger
49 Eggs
50 Fleur-de- —

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

5			6	3	8			4
					5	7		
	8	6	9			3		
7	1		4		3	5		8
9								3
6		4	5		2		9	7
		5			9	8	7	
		3	1					
1			8	5	7			2

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

L	A	S	S	■	L	A	W	■
E	C	H	O	■	O	N	E	■
A	N	A	L	E	C	T	A	■
F	E	D	O	R	A	■	V	O
■	■	■	N	I	L	■	E	A
A	M	A	■	E	E	L	■	K
S	O	N	S	■	S	E	A	■
K	O	A	L	A	■	U	L	T
■	■	C	A	P	S	■	R	E
B	R	O	N	T	E	■	E	X
R	A	N	T	■	A	N	A	T
A	I	D	E	■	L	A	D	■
G	L	A	D	■	S	P	Y	■

P	A	L	O					
I	N	O	N					
E	A	S	Y					
R	T	E	X					
■	■	■	■					
S	M	U	T					
A	N	Y	■					
■	■	■	■					
E	X	C	U	S	E	■	■	■
E	V	K	A	■	■	■	■	■
N	E	A	R	■	■	■	■	■
T	A	T	S	■	■	■	■	■

5	2	3	1	8	6	4	9	7
8	6	7	9	4	5	1	2	3
9	4	1	2	3	7	5	6	8
7	9	5	3	1	2	8	4	6
4	1	6	8	5	9	3	7	2
3	8	2	6	7	4	9	1	5
6	5	9	4	2	3	7	8	1
1	7	4	5	6	8	2	3	9
2	3	8	7	9	1	6	5	4

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:
Under 13 min Genius
13-17 min Scholar
17-21 min Smart
21-25 min Not bad
25+ min Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day

Meat Loaf

INGREDIENTS:
1 tbsp (15 ml) canola oil
2 large onions, peeled and chopped
2 large celery stalks, chopped
1 large green pepper, seeded and chopped
3 garlic cloves, crushed
2 lbs (1 kg) lean ground beef
1 cup (250 ml) fresh breadcrumbs (white or whole wheat)
1 egg, lightly beaten
salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cup (250 ml) canned chopped tomatoes
1/4 cup (50 ml) tomato sauce

METHOD:
1. Preheat oven to 350 F (180 C). Heat oil in a large, deep frying pan, add onions, celery, pepper and garlic and cook 5 minutes over moderate heat (until soft). Transfer vegetables to a large bowl.
2. Add beef, breadcrumbs and egg to vegetables. Season with salt and pepper and knead until well combined.
3. Put tomatoes and tomato sauce into small bowl. Mix well. Add half to meat loaf mixture. Mix again.
4. Transfer meat loaf mixture to lightly-greased baking dish or roasting pan and shape to make loaf, measuring about 7 x 10 in. (18 x 25 cm), mounding slightly at centre. Use side of hand to make groove down length of meat loaf. Pour remaining tomato mixture into groove.
5. Bake for 1-1/4 hours, or until cooked through to centre. (If you have a meat thermometer, it should read 160 F/71 C when loaf is done.) Let stand 10 minutes before slicing and serving.

SERVES 4

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Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Someone has issues with telling the truth. An irrational guy disagrees with confusing words. Don't wait to go home after a melodrama takes place.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Someone's disrespect is hypocritical. An impulsive journey brings some career luck. Try not to isolate yourself at home.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Money luck improves when an exceptional mentor arrives. Elders need extra care today. A belated message makes you happy.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A beloved man undergoes a passing fancy. Refusing to yield leads to a colleague's complaints. Pay attention to your work.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
An opportunity will come out of nowhere. Others are on your side because you inspire trust. Taking a certain pathway causes a problem.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
A remarkable brute will give you stories to tell. Don't lie to a discerning friend. An amusing friend has done a bad job.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
A discovery changes your mind. Be alert to hidden meanings in messages. A man wants to get some hard work done.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
A repair problem requires your attention. A preacher is about to return. Take a walk in your personal safety zone.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
Pay no attention to an inspection. Avoid a war of words with a scathing person. A former lover is spooked by a phone call.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
A persuasive person is ready to forgive. A romantic mystery clears up. A legal matter is shaded by the past.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
A pedantic person aggravates you about a project. Your exceptional memory solidifies your reputation. Walk lightly around oversensitive elders.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A friend wants you to repay a good deed. Someone is glum about being teased. Don't be deceptive to a hurt friend.

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Limited model shown

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Limited model shown

STARTING PRICE ~~$21,195~~

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2009 SANTA FE 2.7L GL

Limited model shown

STARTING PRICE ~~$25,995~~

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GL 5-speed model shown

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